WORLD / A30
Largest mass kidnap in Bagdhad: 150 researchers

METRO / A25
Dolphy's 19-year-old grandson, Nicolo Paulo Quizon, arrested for murder

WORLD / A29
Martin Luther King memorial to rise at National Mall in DC

LIFESTYLE / C1
What is it about Korean drama that has Filipinos spellbound

Gov't to buy P1B worth of cheap drugs from India

By Ronnel W. Domingo, Dianne L. Lucas and Christian V. Esguerra

DESPITE OPPOSITION FROM US PHARMACEUTICAL giant Pfizer, Philippine International Trading Corp. plans to bring in up to P1 billion worth of low-cost medicine in 2007 to make essential drugs affordable to Filipinos.

PITC announced its importation plan as some

GOV'T TO BUY P1B...

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, November 15, 2006 44 9 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 349 P18 website: www.inq7.net

PNP: Rights groups bloat number of political slays

By Alcuin Papa and Norman Bordadora

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE YESTERDAY accused human rights groups of "overstating figures and manipulating the facts" in an attempt to "sensationalize" allegations of extrajudicial executions and undermine the government.

The PNP also pointed to its definition of a related case which does not jibe with that of human

PNP, A7

Asean meet moves venue

World Bank upgrades RP growth forecast

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD BANK HAS UPgraded its economic growth forecast for the Philippines for this year and the next despite a likely US-led global slowdown that could weaken the country's exports.

In its twice-a-year East Asia Update, the World Bank projected that Philippine gross domestic product (GDP) could expand by 5.5 percent this year and 5.7 percent next year, compared with its forecast last March of 5.3 percent and 5.6 percent, respectively.

GDP is the value of goods produced and services rendered in the country in a given period. It does not include remittances from overseas Filipino workers and the income earned by Philippine companies abroad.

"Growth prospects in the Philippines are helped by two factors: The ability of the public sector to invest more in infrastructure and service delivery following the major fiscal adjustments of the past two years and, assuming fiscal adjustment is maintained, [there is the] likelihood that private investments will respond positively," Sanjay Dhar, the World Bank lead economist for the Philippines, said yesterday.

The World Bank noted that

WORLD BANK, A4

SUMMITRY IN PARADISE: A 150-square-meter private beach underscores the tropical luxe of Shangri-La Mactan's Island Resort and Spa. Considered the country's largest that offers the ultimate experience in Filipino hospitality, it has 547 guest rooms and suites, 14 banquet and conference rooms with capacities ranging from 25 to over 1,000. It has world-class facilities for scuba-diving, snorkelling and other water sports as well as for golf and tennis. Asean's original venue was at the Cebu International Convention Center in Mandaue. BONNER JAVIER

Building delay prompts change

ORGANIZERS OF THE Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit in the Philippines have made a last-minute change of venue due to delays in the construction of a P450-million convention center, an official said yesterday.

The Dec. 11-14 summit will be held at Shangri-La Hotel on Mactan Island instead of the Cebu International Convention Center (CICC) across the bridge in Mandaue City, said Police Deputy Director General Avelino Razon Jr.

Razon has been designated head of Task Force Asean, which was created by former Director General Arturo C. Lomibao, Philippine National Police chief. Under the unit are seven other task groups that will handle security matters.

"Some of the foreign delegations expressed concern about the date the convention center would be finished, so it was transferred to Shangri-La," Razon was quoted by The Associated Press and Agence France-Presse in

ASEAN, A22

REWARDS UP FOR 4 ASSASSINS

Cops hunt mayor, 3 others in murders

By Inquirer Staff

A DAY AFTER FOREIGN BUSinessmen urged President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration to go after the perpetrators of political killings, the Philippine National Police announced it was offering a P100,000 reward for the arrest of a town mayor wanted for the murder of a broadcast journalist in Aklan.

In General Santos City, Gov. Miguel Dominguez also put up a P500,000 reward for information that would lead to the arrest of three suspects in the murder of Makati Mayor Gerardo Tabeo on Saturday.

But the Armed Forces of the Philippines, reflecting a sensitivity to the subject, also endorsed the call of retired generals to ban the London-based Amnesty International (AI) from the country for blaming the spate of political killings on the military and declare their representatives persona non grata.

Bear Arlie Arnaldo Tolentino, chief of the AFP civil relations ser-

COPS, A6

SNAKES on the plane? Imaginable. But three live crocodiles, each 1.5-ft long? No wrap. But Glen Pastorfide, chief of the Wild Traffic Monitoring Unit, intercepted just such a cargo from a Paranaque resident on board a flight from Singapore. JOE YACON

Pinoy traveler caught with 3 crocs at Naia

By Volt Contreras

CONSIDER THIS A REAL-LIFE sequel to the recent box-office thriller "Snakes on a Plane."

Airport officials intercepted Monday night a Filipino passenger who had three live crocodiles in his carry-on luggage as he flew home from Cambodia via Singapore.

Unless X-ray monitors mistook the 1.5-foot-long reptiles for leather goods, it was a puzzle to authorities how Enrique Yu Castillo Jr., 58, managed to sneak his scaly companions through two countries.

Castillo, who introduced himself as a businessman residing at Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque City, initially claimed he was carrying live fish in his black bag when accosted by customs and quarantine

PAGE A5

UNTANGLING THE RSBS MESS

₱3.3B investments lost in land buying spree

By Fe Zamora

(Third of four parts)

THE TRAIL OF THE MONEY lost by the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS)—estimated at ₱3.3 billion—led to only one direction—down the drain.

A middle-level official said "warning signals" emerged in the early 1990s. "But there was no reaction plan," he said.

Worse, those who took over did not really try to plug the holes. "They became preoccupied with making money," the official said.

An insurance source said only retired Brig. Gen. Jose Rautraut Jr. knew the extent of the losses. "If only he would talk," the source said wryly.

Rautraut served a succession of AFP chiefs of staff—Generals Lisandro Abadia, the late Arturo Enrile, Arnaldo Acedera, Clemente Mariano and Joselin Nazareno.

Retired and active military officers interviewed by the Inquirer blamed the fall of the RSBS on a combination of factors—a flawed

P3.3B, A13

SPECIAL REPORT

AFP sacks 'sabungero' colonel

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

AN ARMY COLONEL WAS sacked as a brigade commander in Central Mindanao allegedly because his obsession with cockfighting was getting in the way of his performance, the military said.

Col. Felipe Tabao Jr. was relieved as commander of the Army's 604th Infantry Brigade based in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat.

The Tabao case could be the first time in the Armed Forces' recent history that a ranking officer was sacked for cockfighting.

Tabao also figured in the news two years ago in connection with a 5,000-square-meter cock farm

AFP, A13

FIRST-EVER BABY WHALE SHARK CAPTURED ALIVE in the country was named Mini-Me. Discovered by the World Wild Fund-Philippines in Sablayan, Mindoro, in May 2005, it was measured (175 cm. long, 38 cm in girth), photographed and released on the same day. (See related story on Page A13.) MARIA LOURDES D. SOLDEVILLA/WWF-PHILIPPINES

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

Indon terror suspect's wife names his cohorts

THE DETAINED WIFE OF A TOP INDONESIAN terror suspect hiding in southern Philippines has identified six other Asian militants allegedly on the run with her husband, a police official said yesterday.

They include four Indonesians, a Singaporean and a Malaysian—all newly named members of the Southeast Asian-based al Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah terror group—Edmilo Reid Orense Serie told police investigators.

She is the wife of Indonesia's most wanted Dulmatin who, along with suspected Umar Patek, is suspected of plotting the 2002 night club bombings that killed 202 people on Indonesia's Bali island. They have been hiding with top leaders of the local terror group Abu Sayyaf in Sulu, officials said.

Dulmatin's wife "gave us six other names of foreign nationals who are at present with Umar Patek and Dulmatin in Sulu," said Chief Supt. Romeo Ricardo, director of the Philippine National Police intelligence group.

Ricardo, however, did not identify them.

Dulmatin's wife was detained in Jolo last month and was set to be deported to Indonesia after the authorities finished questioning her, said Bureau of Immigration intelligence chief Fidel Huesca.

No borders

United States-backed Philippine troops launched a manhunt for the militants in August.

Ricardo said Dulmatin and Patek could not find protection inside Southern Mindanao Philippine militants, prompting them to try to look for brothers in Indonesia who would be willing to conduct attacks in the Philippines.

"Based on intelligence reporting, around last year ... Umar Patek was communicating with his contacts in Indonesia asking for contacts to recruit suicide bombers from among the militants in that country," Ricardo said.

He said that four suspected bombers were arrested in June 2005 in Mohammad Salah wars, which borders the southern Philippines, and that several others were arrested in Jolo. He did not elaborate.

Aside from the militants in the South, Ricardo said the authorities were monitoring the presence here Muslim of Christian converts to Islam suspected of plotting bomb attacks.

Pia indications

The Rajah Solaiman Movement members here from setting around metropolitan Manila and nearby Cavite and Bulacan provinces, but "we have not seen any indications that they are in their advanced stages of their plan to launch an attack," Ricardo said.

Two or three members have been rounded up in Mindanao by Ramkarun and now be plotting simultaneous bombings in densely populated areas, he said.

But Ricardo said the group had been "severely weakened" with about 35 all militants left. He said it had no central leadership, with some members taking orders from also beyond known to Jolo. ■

BUSINESS Bureau reporter Ma Gonzales flashes a thumbs-up during Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye's regular press conference at Malacañang yesterday where she was back at work after narrowly escaping arrest. Bunye on Libel complaint filed by Jun Ferni Bondoc/Inq. 11-14-2006

Atong arraigned today amid tight guard

By Norman Bordadora

THE SANDIGANBAYAN SPECIAL Division yesterday scheduled for today the arraignment of Charlie "Atong" Ang, deposed President Joseph Estrada's co-accused in a plunder case.

The special division hearing the plunder charges against Estrada ordered the National Bureau of Investigation to bring Ang to the sandiganbayan for his arraignment at 9 a.m.

The special division trying Estrada and his co-accused is chaired by Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Teresita Leonardo-De Castro, with Associate Justices Francisco Villaruz and Edilberto Pecht as members.

Sandiganbayan Clerk of Court Ed Urrutia said a composite team would handle the security arrangements for Ang, Estrada's gambling buddy who was returned to the Philippines on Nov. 13 after escaping for nearly six years in the United States.

Ruel Landa, NBI National Capital Region Office chief, said 10 agents in full battle gear were tasked each escort Ang today. "We will provide him with armed the same security when we fetched him in the airport on Friday," Landa said.

Landa said Ang would serve lunch with and a bulletproof vest.

The NBI on Friday returned the warrant and documents relating to Ang's extradition to the Sandiganbayan, giving the court jurisdiction over the accused. It is now up to the court whether to remand Ang to the Quezon City jail or to his present NBI detention facility.

The Quezon City jail is the sandiganbayan's official custodial facility for those accused before it, but Ang could not be remanded there because he was not arrested by the Quezon City police.

Ang is one of the 11 accused in the P545-million plunder case, which also involves Estrada's wife Luisa "Laarni" Ejercito Estrada, their sons Jinggoy and Jose Jr., and former Estrada executive secretary Edgardo Espiritu.

Ang, Estrada and Espiritu are the only accused in the case who are still at large.

Estrada is detained at his private house in Tanay, Rizal province, after the Supreme Court ordered his release on bail.

Espiritu is detained at the Philippine National Police Custodial Center in Camp Crame in Quezon City.

Ang, through his counsel, has asked that he be kept at the NBI jail in Manila for the duration of his trial.

Renato Villa-Ignacio, the government's top prosecutor in the Estrada plunder case, said he would leave that ang prosecution evidence that his lawyers in danger before the court would grant him the privilege of isolation from other prisoners. ■

Ang on Monday asked the special division that he be detained at the NBI jail and not at the city jail, citing threats to his life.

"These threats could be due to the publication that he will be used as a state witness against the others accused and he will be providing information to connection with other cases, viz. The Angelo Reyes case," Ang's counsel, Alfredo Villamor.

The Garcinez Bakdang case involves the alleged voluntary execution of a number of suspected bank robbers by police officers that concluded near Gen. Pacific Lozano in May 1995.

Lozano, an opposition senator, had been elected by a regional trial court of any culpability relating to the killings. Government officials, however, said that Ang could have new information on the case.

The Benitez disappearance, in the 1999 involves government casino security employee Edgar Benitez who allegedly leaked a police warning about Vice President Joseph Estrada's gambling with Ang.

He has yet to surface and is believed to have been killed. PDI, a report from Margaux Gren

Live with it, Bunye tells media on libel raps filed by Mike A.

By Gil C. Cabacungan

JUSTICE IS THERE.

This was the advice of Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye to journalists regarding the spate of libel charges being filed by the President's lawyer Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, adding that any one who feels unfairly attacked by the press has recourse to the law.

Bunye was reacting to a string of public criticisms regarding the attempt by presidential lawyer to arrest a criminal of arrest on reporter Ma Gonzales on Monday at the Malacañang press office.

Arroyo had sued Gonzales for libel over an article she wrote two years ago in Newsbreak magazine, in which she listed issues being the Macapagal-Arroyo in her own term—among them the fact that her husband was "governed to be involved and perceived to use his influence to win appointments."

Due to one of 41 journalists charged with libel by the First Gentleman.

Gonzales, now a reporter for Business Mirror, was out accused when the police came to arrest her. She has since posted bail for her temporary release.

The National Press Club (NPC), in a strongly worded statement, described the police operation against her as a "colossal display of arrogance." The Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR) called for the closing of cases "to stop the screws tighten's assault on press freedom."

Senate President Manuel Villar and other members also denounced the decision as "appalling."

Trying to defuse the situation, the press secretary told media he had not been informed that the police were going to the Kia Eagle office building, where he holds office on the raided Bunye, to arrest Gonzales at the reporters. He opined that the policemen should have been "more circumspect."

Philippine National Police chief Director General Oscar Calderon likewise claimed no previous knowledge of the attempt to arrest a reporter inside Malacañang. At a press forum, he said the police "might have exercised a little discretion" and ordered an investigation into the matter.

"What happened here was that the case was considered ... they did not have any warrant to arrest outside of Malacañang," Calderon said.

The First Gentleman has denied he ordered the policemen to serve the warrant on Gonzales in the presence of media. He would not guarantee, however, that there would be no arrest of journalists, especially if a warrant was valid and the offense serious. With Juliet Labog-Pascual, Tina Santos and Alcuin Papa

Losing Naia3 bidder says it can complete project

By Leila B. Salaverria

LUCIO TAN-OWNED ASIA'S Emerging Dragon Corp. (AEDC) yesterday asked the Supreme Court to allow it to complete the multibillion Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

The high-stakes bid nullified the bid's operator-member arm, MCI between Philippine International Air Terminals Corp. Inc. (Piatco), and the government in 2003 for being onerous and disadvantageous to the government.

AEDC lawyer Roberto Bunag and Jose Bernas, lawyer for turnover Dioceo Sor Rep. Sabarish Robredo, yesterday sought the dismissal of the government's appeal which was filed by Piatco before it had to do indeed?"

EJ Bargonia

Bunag said the corporation proceedings would be unlawful because the bid on which it is to ably stands on already belonging to the government, while Bernas argued that there should not be any compensation for vacated contracts.

The AEDC, once awarded the contract, is willing to pay Piatco and subcontractor Takenaka the amount they had spent to build the facility, and would put in more money to complete the project.

Bunag said the government should benefit from awarding the contract to AEDC. "It does would be an enormous saving from AEDC, then it would be important the for the government to have the amount.

He said the government's cancellation decision to award the Terminal 3 contract to Piatco Consortium Inc. Congo was ruled to graft and corruption.

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'Gonzales not part of chain'

NATIONAL SECURITY adviser Norberto Gonzales has no business underwriting soldiers and policemen on his party's ideology, attack advocates the asylum seeker of the country's democratic Raul democracy with semi-democracy through a "semi-revolution."

Sec. Rodolfo Biazon made this assertion in response to remarks he took the Senate floor to denounce the arrest of nineteen being conducted by Gonzales' political party, Partido Demokratikong Pwersa ng Pilipinas (PDP), in mayor by soldiers and policemen. He sought a Senate inquiry into the matter.

While billed as measures on national security measures, the talks were nothing but an indoctrination on the political ideology of Democracy—which calls for radical social changes in society "amounting to a social revolution," he said.

Biazon said the soldiers are being called upon to play a major role in the ideological transformation of Philippine society. What would an anti-communist force be left to do

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World Bank upgrades RP growth forecast

From page A1

Philippine economic performance had strengthened, posting a 5.5-percent GDP growth in the first half as favorable weather helped increase farm output by over 5 percent. A rebound in electronics exports pushed overall export growth to 17.5 percent while the services sector, contributing about half of total output, continued to lead overall growth.

At a press briefing yesterday, Bhatia said that remittances from OFWs continued to support domestic demand and that the inflows were likely to be sustained in the years ahead given the diversification of workers being employed overseas and their countries of destination.

Oil prices to stabilize

He said the higher demand for more migrant workers in oil-producing countries in the Middle East was providing the country some sort of a hedging mechanism against skyrocketing global oil prices. Oil prices were now expected to stabilize at levels below the record highs posted last summer.

"We may have seen the peak in oil prices and interest rates in the region," said Homi Bhatia, the World Bank chief economist for East Asia and Pacific. "So the prospects are good for domestic demand to strengthen and to offset weaker exports."

5th consecutive year

The World Bank estimates that oil prices will likely stabilize at $60 per barrel in 2007, down from $65 this year.

The projected Philippine growth rate for the next two years was within the same range of 4 to 6 percent for other middle-income countries in Southeast Asia.

East Asia as a whole was forecast to post its fifth consecutive year of strong growth this year, backed by a substantial decline in poverty. It is seen growing by about 8 percent, the second strongest pace in the past five years.

Emerging East Asia comprises developing economies—China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and some smaller economies—and four newly industrialized economies: Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan.

China to underpin region's growth

China's growth of more than 10 percent was projected to underpin the region's overall GDP growth.

"East Asia has been growing at unprecedented rates and we are happy to note that the Philippines is moving in the same direction. We hope this serves as a challenge for the Philippines to keep pace with the fastest growing region, while also decisively addressing poverty and inequality, which remain serious problems," said Lorraine Blankes, World Bank Philippines acting country director.

The number of people living on or below $2 a day in East Asia was seen falling to around 500 million or 25.3 percent of the population this year. The figure that around 25 million would have been lifted out of severe poverty since 2005.

Poverty line

For the Philippines, the World Bank has estimated that 30.8 percent of the population was living below the $1-a-day poverty line—the minimum amount of income by which 41.3 percent was below the $2-a-day threshold.

Consumption-based inequality in the country was estimated by the bank to have been reduced to 44.5 percent in 2003 from 46.2 percent in 2000. But this was still relatively high compared with most of its neighbors, including Indonesia (34.3 percent), Laos (34.6 percent), Korea (30 percent) and Thailand (42.5 percent).

Major constraints

To address social inequality, Bhatia said Manila must improve quality expenditures and better target education and health benefits for the poor.

"Government expenditure can expand in real terms in relation to GDP especially with falling interest rates and as more foreign private fund agencies are willing to lend at lower spreads," he said.

Reforms in agriculture, such as land reform, were also seen as crucial in bridging urban-rural economic gaps.

The World Bank also noted that poor infrastructure investments and high cost of doing business remained as major constraints in enhancing the country's competitiveness.

The Philippines ranked 126th out of 175 countries and economies surveyed in terms of ease in doing business this year. It takes 48 days to start a business and as much as 500 days to endorse a contract in the country, the World Bank survey showed. With a report from AFP

ROADMAP TO ENERGY SELF-SUFFICIENCY Series 5

AN UPDATE: A Power Crisis MUST be Averted

GOOD NEWS: NO rotating brownouts from November 16 to December 17 and **cost of electricity will NOT increase this year.**

BAD NEWS: The cost of electricity could increase next year as WESM has hired TRANSCO, the power generators, and the distribution utilities for the higher cost of electricity traded in the WESM spot market due to the shutdown of various power plants & a substantial rate increase as the 2,700 MW gas-fired plants will have to run on the more expensive bunker oil or diesel due to the scheduled maintenance of the Malampaya Natural Gas Pipeline.

The Energy Regulatory Commission **(ERC)** has scheduled public hearings on November 13 to 28 on petitions on power rate increase from TRANSCO, power generators, MERALCO & other distribution utilities. The Consumer & Oil Price Watch **(COPW)** will attend all the hearings.

DOE PROJECTION OF NEW POWER PLANTS REQUIRED IN 2006 - 2011 MUST BE UPDATED

1. With elections in May virtually a certainty as Congress adjourns on December 20 and time has run out on con-ass, **the GDP growth rate of 6.5% will be sustained** as foreign & local investors can look forward to a predictable political environment. This will trigger a building boom fueled by OFW remittances.
2. COPW will coordinate closely with the DOE, NEDA, real estate developers of residential subdivisions, condominiums & shopping malls to project their power requirements from 2007 - 2011 as it takes five years to build a new power plant.
3. The DOE power demand projections as of September will have to be updated to reflect the growth in the economy.
   - For the Luzon grid, the peak demand is expected to reach **7,886 MW** in 2010. Our dependable capacity is **10,526 MW** so we will have a surplus of **2660 MW** by 2010.
   - For the Visayas, power supply will be critical in 2011. **200 MW** of new power plants must be operational by 2011.
   - For Mindanao, power supply will be critical in 2009. **100 MW** of new power plants must be operational by 2009.

PSALM MUST FAST TRACK THE PRIVATIZATION OF POWER PLANTS

Only 120 MW of power plants were sold by PSALM five years after the effectivity of RA 9136 Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (EPIRA).

PSALM Chairman Margarito Teves & PSALM President Nieves Cacrio have set an ambitious target of selling 5,905 MW of power plants in two years (July 2006 - June 2008) compared to only 120 MW sold in five years.

We Call on the Executive & Congress to Amend the EPIRA Law before Congress goes on recess on December 20 to AVERT a Power Crisis

COPW proposes the following amendments to the EPIRA Law:

1. Privatize TRANSCO by granting the winning bidder a 25-year Congressional franchise to operate.
2. Lower the target for NPC asset privatization from 70% to 50% for NPC Owned Plants and the transfer of management & control of NPC-IPP plants to IPP Administrators.
3. Make the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) truly independent so its decisions will NOT be subject to review by the courts. **COPW recommends that once ERC makes a ruling, it must be made public and allow the affected parties 30 days to appeal such decision beyond which it can no longer be reversed by the courts.**
4. To encourage local & foreign investors to participate in the bidding of power projects, the privatization process must be guided by the principles of flexibility, transparency and the creation of a level playing field for all participants in the process. Prequalified bidders must submit their technical & financial requirements.

COPW Commitment to the Consuming Public

COPW will coordinate with NAPOCOR & the power generators on the scheduled maintenance of power plants & major breakdowns to avoid the use of bunker oil or diesel that will result in an increase in power rates in the WESM.

For online posting of COPW issues, log on to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/COPW/

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Correction

PITH NOV 12 ISSUE, a Lifestyle article on Page F4—"Famous artists and alumni awarded"—misstated some of the names of the trustees and supporters of the J. Moreno Scholarships. They are Stella M. Amorsolo—not Stella M. Ching Mcconnell—not Mcmicrosoft; Emilio—not Emely—Lopez; Amelia Magsaysay-Ho—not Magsaysay and Tess Ayson—not Ayond.

The same article also misstated the names of the deans of the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts and UP College of Medicine. The dean of the UP College of Fine Arts is Florencio C. Cabangon—not Ralene de Jesus. The dean of the UP College of Medicine is Dr. Alberto E. Roldan—not Dr. Andrew Fernando.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for corrections of factual errors or writeup in the Inq7 Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 757 Shaw Blvd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City; fax 897-57-03-94; e-mail info@inq7.net; or call 897-57-03-94.

Corrections about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Letters Editor, Inquirer, at the same address; e-mail address: inquirer@inquirer.com.ph; or fax No. 897-97-93-94. Jerry Amador, Ombudsman. For phone number: 1-897-8000/Local 502.

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Legislators buck Church, take population issue into own hands

By Philip C. Tubeza

DESPITE THE OPPOSITION OF the powerful Catholic Church, some 70 legislators representing 33 provinces yesterday banded as a bloc to promote "responsible" population growth and other reproductive health issues in the countryside.

The new group, called Local Legislators' League for Reproductive Health, Environment and Development (LLERED), was launched at the Imperial Palace Suites in Quezon City.

In a statement, the ILPHED legislators described their group as "the first-ever local league of elected government officials."

"Its primary purpose is to champion, subscribe and concretize appropriate and sustainable responses to population, health, environment and development issues affecting Philippine society," the ILPHED said.

Aklan Rep. Exequiel Lagumen, one of the organizers of the group, urged those present during the launch to support the passage of House Bill No. 3773 or the proposed Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Management Act.

Lagumen said the House needed only to have a quorum to pass HB 3773, which the Church vehemently opposes.

The formation of the league was initiated by the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD) "as a proactive response to the growing need for policy change at the local level."

"We want to mainstream population, health, environment and development concerns in the local level. We want to draw lessons from responsive and sustainable legislation on these issues and facilitate their replication," said 1st PLCPD board member.

"You are ever wonder why we have shortages in electricity? Why so many Filipinos go hungry? It is because we are continuously growing. More and more overstretch the ever-occupying forest and natural resources," Lagumen said.

"Every year more people are competing for scarce resources, leading to the devastation of forests and depletion of natural resources," he added.

Senator Edgardo Angara, chairman of the Senate committee on education, arts and culture, said he was invited to be one of the guests of honor at the launch but could not attend because he had to preside over a session

Cops hunt mayor, 3 others in murders

By [illegible] A.I.

vice, yesterday released copies of the Aug. 10 resolution of the Association of Generals and Flag Officers strongly condemning 40+ "irresponsible coded and unfair acts" by ranking officers which were "not conducive" but "prejudicial" to the government.

The Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce (JFC) in the Philippines on Monday said profit and killings had no place in a democratic society.

"These murders should be investigated thoroughly and their brutal responsible parties tried under the law," said the JFC, which includes businessmen from the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Japan and Korea. The association of regional headquarters of multinational companies joined the unprecedented statement of concern.

Seven US-based apparel makers last week also expressed concern over human rights abuses in the Philippines.

The human rights group Karapatan put the number of political killings at 783 since 2001. The heaviest count is 256. (Also related story on Page A1.)

PNP dialogue

Mr. Arroyo earlier day ordered the Philippine National Police (PNP) to hold dialogues with the foreign chambers of commerce to keep them abreast of the investigations and government efforts to stop the killings. Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Bunye said Malacañang was aware that "there is a continuing, insidious propaganda campaign to undermine public trust in this government." But he said the administration was committed to stop the culture of violence."

In Iloilo City, Chief Supt. Josey Baraza, PNP Western Visayas director, said he was recommending to headquarters the approval of a P150,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of Jojo Alejaga Alfredo in connection with the killing of radio commentator Hernan Rinalan.

Arrested in Fortaleza, went into hiding after the Iloilo Regional Trial Court issued a warrant for his arrest on Sept. 7, 2006. Witnesses said investigate shot and killed Rinalan on Nov. 13, 2004, near the city hall.

Justice elusive for journalists

Bunye said he had also asked the Aklan provincial government to put up its own reward to encourage informants to come out.

"The inability of our law enforcers to even arrest the suspected gunmen two years after the murder clearly shows that justice remains elusive for journalists and other victims of summary killings in the country," said Jose Torres Jr., president of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP). "We only encourage more attacks and murders against journalists."

Iloilo was among 11 journalists killed in 2004 and one of the 10 murdered since 1986 whose cases were unsolved, according to the NUJP tally. Surveyors tactic people have been killed during the drivers administration.

Three motorcycle-riding gunmen shot and killed the 58-year-old Tabuc in Poblacion Medium in Barangay around 5 p.m. on Tuesday. He was driving a jeep with his security escort and a bodyguard sought for his passengers. He was going the couple a tour of the town. He was rushed to a hospital but succumbed later to a single bullet wound in the head.

Chief Supt. Lorenzo Ibarra, Central Mindanao police director, told reporters possible motives for the murder included politics, the Lumayno's no-nonsense campaign against all forms of illegal activities and the seizure of "Shabu Ash," a 10.50 mill ton prec. from inside of his funeral home. Illegal firearms.

Veiled threat

In Congress, lobbyist lawmakers said Monday's JFC statement could be a veiled threat against the Arroyo.

Party-list Rep. Teddy Casiño of Bayan Muna said the JFC and US apparel companies were "concerned about their image and do not want to be identified as accomplices to human rights violations such as the infringement of labor rights, killings of activists, especially labor leaders."

Rep. Imee Marcos, also of Bayan, said, "Obviously the foreign investors are through the coming" of the administration. "The myth is, the killings continue and the Arroyo government has obtained a new conviction rate against all suspected perpetrators and masterminds," he added.

Death squads still abound, encouraged in part by statistics rejected by the Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas headed by Mr. Arroyo's National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, according to Overpic. (See related story on Page A2.)

But administration allies—Representatives Eduardo Zialcita of Pangasinan and Lorna Silverio of Bulacan—called on the JFC to give the Iloilo Commission freedom to augment and the police a chance to solve the killings instead of making sweeping statements.

Be more patient

"We urge everyone to be more patient and give authorities enough time to complete their investigation. Let us support them instead of prejudging their work. Besides, expressive timetables have already been set for the completion of their work," Zialcita said.

Silverio said it was "not logical and sound" to make the solution of the killings a condition to JFC's investments and aid.

"We urge the JFC to be fair and open-minded in light of the various efforts of government to address the unexplained killings. It should also consider the country's fiscal reform and economic growth, and the improved outlook on the country given by various credit-rating agencies as main crucial factors in investing here," she added. With reports from Jhesa T. Bentilogan, Christine O. Avendaño, Michael Lee Ubac and Nestor P. Burgos, Inquirer Visayas, and Agaldez Zenin, Inquirer Mindanao.

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All applicants for all judicial positions must submit to the JBC Secretariat ASAP via fax, mail or e-mail their updated PBC Form 1, sworn statement and landbank liabilities, and current residential and e-mail addresses.

November 14, 2006

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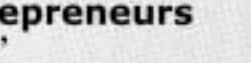

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PNP: Rights groups bloat number of political slays

From page A1

rights groups.

Reacting to Monday's statement by the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in the Philippines expressing concern over the reported upsurge in violence, PNP Director General Oscar Calderon said that the number of political killings compiled by policy-wonk-only activities of the three-class-700-reported by human rights groups.

"Those figures are wrong, unexplained," Calderon said. "If you use manipulated data, then your figures are wrong. Not all those are political killings."

Kanapunan yesterday said it was disturbing by its report that since 2001 there have been 700 political killings.

"It includes cases that have never been reported to the authorities because the victims and their families do not report them out of fear, distrust or because the authorities themselves have refused to listen to them," said Kanapunan secretary general Marie Hilao-Enriquez said.

The incomplete count of assassinations of activist-militants is 256.

PNP Deputy Director-Justice Nestor Jr said 336 leftwing activists and reporters were murdered by unidentified or political reasons since 2001. Another 160 were killed, he said, because of grudges or in legitimate clashes and cross-fires.

"There's an obvious effort to sensationalize the incidence of slain activists and journalists by deliberately overlooking the figures and manipulating the facts," Razon said.

'NPA behind many killings'

Razon said the communist New People's Army, which has been waging a 37-year insurgency, was behind many of the killings and was blaming the government for propaganda.

Condemnation for the murder of activists or activists on rule in the Philippines, but Razon said suspects had been charged in 25 of 26 cases filed for the murder of journalists.

"There are no cases of rape, and the guilty will be brought before the bar of justice whatever they may be," Razon said, adding that there was no government policy to kill journalists.

Razon also said that a difference in the interpretation of whether a case could be considered media killings.

Enriquez, who heads Task Force Ilog which is investigating the media and leftist killings, told reporters in a forum that National Police Commission regulations define a case as media-related when suspects have been identified and cases filed against them.

He said that it did not really matter if a suspect was arrested or not.

Razon said the interpretation of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines of a media case involving the suspension of the suspects was "not the proper definition."

He said that the NUJP had submitted to the PNP a list of 46 killings. But Task Force Ilog found that only 16 cases could be considered "work-related."

"These cases are those involving real members of media. The others are not accredited with any media organization and hence cannot be considered media-related," Razon said.

RAZON

PNP shooting messenger

Enriquez said the Melo Commission and PNP Task Force Ilog should stop "shooting the messenger."

"The Melo Commission and Task Force Ilog are trying to discredit Kanapunan in questioning our list of victims of extrajudicial killings but this will not solve their credibility problem nor will this solve human rights violations," Enriquez said.

She said said that because of the two groups' credibility and inquiry items, Kanapunan and the families of the victims had no choice but not to cooperate with them.

"There were many instances when families of victims had gone to the police for help and did not get any. Task force Ilog had cleared the military and police before it began investigating the cases and the Melo Commission had given blind generals' rights groups and victims' families have no choice but to abandon them," Enriquez said.

Still, Enriquez said Kanapunan had sent documents to the commission such as the January human rights report of Amnesty International on killings in the Philippines and the fact-finding mission report of Canada and Belgian lawyers on the killings of lawyers and judges in the country, as well as those involving retired Archbishop Teodoro Bacani Jr. and Fr. Rodolfo Pulquerio.

Oplan Bantay Laya

Enriquez said the Melo Commission had involved information on Oplan Bantay Laya that was believed to be the state policy responsible for the killings and abductions. This could be a lead for the commission's supposed investigation, she said.

"Supposedly, the Melo Commission did not want to look into the complicity of its author to the state-sponsored attacks on civilians," Enriquez said.

Kanapunan added that corruption-related killings were not limited to high-profile assassinations like the ones committed by hooded motorcycle-riding assassins or death squads.

'Collateral damage'

It said unexplained killings were done through carelessness or what it known as "salvaging," assassination, death due to strafing, indiscriminate firing and bombing, shelling or aerial bombardment, and massacres.

The last two categories include victims euphemistically described by government authorities as "collateral damage" during military operations.

Enriquez said that Kanapunan also included in its list some of the suspected this August massacre in the Hacienda Luisita in March 2005 and the victims of the Pulanda Luisita, Palo and Kapalong in massacres—all allegedly perpetrated by state security forces.

Solons urge quick action on fares rollback petition

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House bill would turn medical tourism into $125-M industry

By Philip C. Tubeza

A BILL CREATING the Medical Tourism Bureau (MTB) has been filed in the House of Representatives to oversee the promising medical tourism business in the country and turn it into a $125-million industry.

Manuel Jose Bautista Rep. Jeanne Ruffy-Biron filed House Bill No. 5930 to address the needs of foreign tourists as well as Filipinos overseas who may want to avail themselves of medical treatment in the country.

Biron said the MTB will also coordinate with the private entities involved in providing medical services to foreigners.

"If we can properly manage our health and wellness sector, the country may export $125 million (initially and expansive) in the next five years, progressively each year. After all, our medical professionals are among the best in the world and among the most affordable," the lawmaker said.

Biron said the bill would complement the task force created by President Macapagal-Arroyo through Executive Order 272 that aims to promote the development of three service sectors—(1) information and communication technology, health and wellness, and logistics through public and private sector initiatives.

She said the EO also created a task force for the Philippine Medical Tourism Program (PMTP) composed of 11 government agencies that have some role to play in the success of the program.

Despite the good intentions of the EO, especially on health and wellness, "coordination has been experienced both by the agencies involved and by the private sector wishing to participate," Biron said.

"HB 5930 will centralize the functions of the PMTP and interpret some of the different functions of the different agencies pertinent to the PMTP under one office," he said.

Biron said the new bureau shall formulate policies relative to the development of the medical tourism industry, implement the plans and programs relative to the projects, and administer, coordinate and supervise the activities of the government agencies having health and wellness.

It will also be tasked with facilitating the "simplification of procedures and regulations for the attainment of medical services by foreign tourists and returning overseas Filipino workers, recognizing the government as the sole coordinator that ensures health and wellness," he said.

Moreover, it shall formulate standards for health and wellness-oriented establishments that will provide minimum levels of operating quality and efficiency in order to ensure that facilities, personnel and services are maintained in accordance with acceptable local and international norms in the operation of tourism-related establishments, Biron said.

E. Yambot, tutor, 74

SOLEDAD M. YAMBOT, a retired teacher and tutor of Japanese publisher August St. Vendor...died in June. Hanya Ruiz, or Mrs. Ang, she was 74.

Survivors include her other brothers Reuben and Eleuterio in-law Gloria Mildred...Aurora, Andres, Lorna and Alejandro...cousin Carmen Ruiz and Rebecca...uncle-in-law Francisco Mojica, and other relatives.

The body lies at the family home in Jaro. Interment will be announced later.

Standoff at Customs finally ends, meeting set today

By Lolit B. Saberorte

THE STANDOFF BETWEEN THE BUREAU OF Customs and Batasan personnel of customs brokers that began on Monday has ended with the latter finally resuming the filing of import entries early yesterday afternoon.

Boy Salgado, officer in charge of the Import Appraisal Sampling Management Division at the Manila International Container Port, said the groups of Batasan personnel decided to end their boycott in preparation for a meeting with customs officials.

Numerous offices

The Batasan personnel stopped filing import entries beginning Monday in protest over what they said were the numerous offices covered by Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales that slowed down the processing of their papers and delayed the release of their shipments.

Aside from those at the MICP, Batasan personnel at the Port of Manila also joined the strike.

Director Nicasio Conferido of the BOC's Enforcement and Security Service said he and the groups of brokers' liaison officers talked things over and decided that any future grievances should be forwarded to a committee that the agency would create.

Conferido said he explained to the Batasan personnel that the offices that Morales created were meant to double-check assessed shipments to ensure they were charged the correct taxes and duties, and to ensure that no questionable shipments were released.

Morales, for his part, also said the new offices he created to double-check shipments and assessments had helped the bureau increase its collection, pointing out that the BOC now has a P6.5-billion surplus.

"Our only aim is to collect what is due the government. If we hadn't been watching the shipments, we would not have even one collection," Morales said.

Difficult time transacting

Before his meeting with Conferido, Salgado had said his group's members had experienced having their shipments examined by shorter enforcers only to be blocked later by officers of Morales for redocketing.

"Our shipments were already cleared and then they'd be blocked again. We are having a difficult time transacting with the bureau. There are too many offices to deal with," he said.

(continued on page A-2)

Pinoy traveler caught with 3 crocs at Naia

(from page A-1)

ther inspectors at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Upon a check, she smuggled his secret cargo: three live Siamese crocodiles, each about 1.5 feet long.

The species is on the endangered list under Philippine law and international accords.

Glen Pantoñilo, an environmentalist affiliated at the Naia, said his office was tipped off recently on her travels that Castillo might attempt to bring endangered species into the country.

This was because the passengers had earlier applied for a permit to import exotic animals for sale abroad, said Pantoñilo, chief of the Naia-based Wildlife Traffic and Monitoring Unit of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources.

Young ones

Customs officials were then alerted about Castillo's arrival at around 9:30 p.m. Monday on Singapore Airlines flight SQ 876, the officials told the bureau.

Castillo's travel records showed that he first boarded a Silkair flight from Phnom Penh's Pochentong Airport then transferred to SQ 876 at Singapore's Changi Airport for the final leg to Manila, the official said.

By their length, the three crocodiles appeared to be juveniles, he said. Adults of such species normally grow to a meter long at the age of six months.

A Naia statement said Castillo was also found carrying two bottles containing exotic orchid cultures without a phytosanitary permit from the Bureau of Plant Industry.

Last passenger

Castillo has been placed under investigation for violation of Republic Act No. 9147 (Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act) and the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species, according to Pantoñilo.

Pantoñilo said the three crocodiles were wrapped in a tee and were the only contents of Castillo's bag. He traveled alone and was the last among the passengers to file out past the customs desk, he added.

Coming out of the Naia's media office said the passenger, who yesterday was being assisted by a lawyer, was also being investigated by the Bureau of Customs for possible violation of the Customs and Tariff Code.

He also said the extra layer of checking provided opportunities for noncompliant Customs personnel to extort money from them.

But Conferido said he had asked the Batasan personnel to submit complaints, backed up by affidavits, against striking personnel and warned that the bureau would act on them.

Salgado said the boycott could have caused the MICP and the POM to lose about P800 million a day.

But Morales said the bureau was not affected because most of the import entries at the two ports paid their duties at banks and not at the BOC.

Meanwhile, Morales issued yesterday an order for the arrest of any person who would stop anybody from filing an import entry.

The order, however, has not been enforced because none of the brokers' liaison personnel stopped people from filing an import entry, according to Conferido.

ORIENTAL MINDORO

"Rising Above The Challenges Of Time"

56th Founding Anniversary

November 15, 2006

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ORIENTAL MINDORO
CALAPAN CITY

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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As we commemorate the 56th Founding Anniversary of our beloved Province of Oriental Mindoro, with our theme **'Oriental Mindoro: Rising Above the Challenges of Time'**, we celebrate the strength of our province in coping with the difficulties and challenges of modern times. We also highlight the strength of our people bound by common dreams, unanimous goal and principles as we unite in building a more peaceful, more progressive province.

Join us as we celebrate the beauty and richness of our province and our cultural riches and experience the uniqueness of the island paradise of Oriental Mindoro — an emerging eco-tourist destination in the country today!

Mabuhay ang Oriental Mindoro! Mabuhay ang mga Mindoreño!

ARNOLD MENDOZA
Governor

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ORIENTAL MINDORO
CALAPAN CITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE GOVERNOR
SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN

As we mark the 56th Founding Anniversary of the Province of Oriental Mindoro, it is my distinct pride and honor to be one of those who are under the helm of the state's legislative and executive institutions.

Many challenges had come our way in the past years. Our province has been relentlessly threatened by natural calamities — earthquakes, landslides, strong typhoons... But despite all these, our province will enjoy continuous mobility... and true enough it did.

The speedy recuperation of the province from the ill effects of these calamities was propelled by the steadfast and collaborative efforts of all Oriental Mindoreños and our local leaders, purposely driven by the spirit of bayanihan!

We are then challenged to continuously live these Oriental Mindoreño values to continue to face challenges and to ensure victorious end for the future ahead.

Our beloved province has awakened to the cries of progress. We envisioned Oriental Mindoro to be a prosperous province to get with the times. And the state will need its valiant to do positive measures and potentials. Oriental Mindoro being the land locked because its members and resident Filipinos are in the midst of rural and other industrial activities to thrive in... A premium vision! Possible this could make the province as the BREADBOWL major food supplier to Metro Manila, Southern Tagalog and the Visayas. Oriental Mindoro's natural beauty can strengthen the province as one of the country's emerging eco-tourist destinations.

With sound political environment, local leaders being united and well-bound in the pursuit of an effective, efficient and responsive governance, coupled by the active participation of all of us, Oriental Mindoreños, we will realize our great dreams for the province in reality.

Our Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Oriental Mindoro will continue to be a effective and effective partner of the provincial government in effecting all its goals and aspirations.

Mabuhay ang mamayang lalawigan! Mabuhay ang mga Sangguniang Panlalawigan!

ATTY. MARIA EXPEDITA A. ANDRIA
Provincial Vice Governor

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HISTORY
PEOPLE
GOVERNANCE
ECONOMY
LOCATION

8 - POINT PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

PANALIGAN ADMINISTRATION'S
EIGHT PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
VISION

A province with protected and well managed environment where peace and growth are supported by a vibrant economy and empowered citizenry sustained by competitive and entrepreneurial governance enhanced with major food supplier to Metro Manila, Southern Tagalog and the Visayas, the Philippines' emerging eco-tourism destination.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
– to increase agricultural production and productivity through livestock and poultry production, fishery development, income production, agro industrialization and support infrastructure to realize greater rural incomes and create adequate rural employment for the people

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT
– maximize the potential of Oriental Mindoro as rural basket through potent water supply and port development, improvement of irrigation facilities and concrete major rural networks connecting through major agricultural centers and tourism areas of the province

SOCIAL SERVICES DELIVERY
Health, Education, Housing, Social Welfare
– provide adequate and quality health services to the underserved families in the Philhealth insurance Program, provide more opportunities for children and the youth to study by opening more schools, hiring of teachers, provision of educational materials, etc., provide decent housing for the homeless families and relocate the informally resident communities and resettled for the Mangyans and capacity building of the cultural tribe program
– comprehensive program for the welfare of the disadvantaged sector
– facilitate interventions aimed for the landless and land tenants primary aim such as Oriental Mindoro responding to the needs of the landless

LIVELIHOOD AND EMPLOYMENT GENERATION
– to provide livelihood opportunities for small scale enterprises and develop priority skills to generate livelihood and income opportunities and provide more capital, promote the "One Town One Product" program, develop agri-tourism sites and expand the services of the Provincial Employment Service Office (PESO)

TOURISM PROMOTION
– aggressively promote and market the tourism attractions of the different municipalities to highlight the cultural and historical richness of the province, maximize the effectiveness and opportunities of the being Republic Mansion Highway and improve infrastructure leading to green destinations in the province

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION
– protect the mountains and forests of the province from deforestation caused by illegal logging and protect the biodiversity of the province, implement community based coastal resource management program, protected areas as integrated Solid Waste Management Program and Clean waters

PEACE & ORDER
– strengthen the provincial, city and municipal peace and order councils and encourage private sector participation in the discussion of peace and order issues and maintain close coordination between and among the LGUs, Philippine National Police, Philippine Army and other law enforcement agencies in the province

LOCAL GOVERNANCE
– develop a dynamic and responsive provincial government organization, strengthen local governance, private sector and civil society linkages and implement an intergovernmental concept and holistic approach

Flood victims to showcase their art born of calamity

CEBU—THE BANGKOK ARTS EXHIBIT, A showcase of 4,000 wood sculptures created by residents of the Senior Amazing Gift Villages in Barangay Sabang, Quezon, is coming to this city.

The exhibit starts today, with the theme "Bantigas Arts Exhibit: From Tragedy to Creativity," will be held from Dec. 2 to 4 at the Abellana Session Hall in Mabolo.

Sculptor Tata Pilar Contreras, who taught and mentored the Bangkos residents in the art of woodcarving, will ticket an interactive forum that will be open to the public on Dec. 3, at the mezzanine floor of Sevilla Trade Center in San Carlos.

Until the proceeds from the sale of sculptures during the Bangkos exhibit will be donated to start a revolving fund that Ground Zero Foundation Inc. in Cebu can use for their next livelihood projects. This is Bangkos' way of thanking San Mateo, with other UK communities," said Jovian Flores, senior manager for Community Partnerships, Public Affairs Group of Smart.

PLDT and Smart have adopted a GK village located in Barangay Budlaan in Cebu City for informal settlers.

There will also be a preview of the exhibit in several schools and universities here between Nov. 20 and 24. The Bangkos Arts exhibit, "Bangkos: a Story Life from Devastation," will be shown to fine arts, architecture, anthropology, sociology and political science students.

The Bangkos Sculptors, former fishermen and farmers, have become a symbol of hope. When their homes, farms and fishing boats were destroyed by floods and mudslides during successive typhoons in late 2004, every-thing seemed to happen.

"Di ye talaga namin alam kung paano kami makabangon uli. Sagi lang po kami nagpapasalamat dahil meron pagsisi sa amin, kaming pamilya na nakaligtas. Dito dahil kami kasi na-nasa gulugod ito. Ito na nga nakaligtas ito sa ating lahat," said Alfredo Cordinada, a 47-year-old fisherman and father of 11.

Those days, however, Barangay Bangkos is busy carving out a bright future. The community has now homes as a result of the partnership of Smart Communications Inc., Ground Zero Foundation and the local government.

Honasan pal seeks tapes of mutiny

By Dona K. Quimpondo

A FORMER BANK executive linked to the daylong July, 2003 mutiny in 2000 senators asked a Manila regional trial court to compel three television networks to submit the footage of their interviews with the accused junior military officers for help whether host of coup d'état charges.

Ernesto Maceda, a former senator of the Philippines and an associate of fugitive former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, asked Judge Teresa Pilapil to order respondents of GMA Network Inc., ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. and Eagle Broadcasting Network to produce in court the tapes of interviews with the accused in July 2003.

The pleading, signed by Maceda's counsel Dennis Castrence Jr., said the footage "are relevant to prove the 'inducement'" of Maceda, tagged as being among the conspirators who planned the July 27, 2003, takeover by rebel soldiers of the plush Oakwood Premiere apartment hotel in Makati City.

Out on bail

Maceda, one of the leaders of the Philippine Islands Liberation Army, was out on bail, had said in previous interviews that the group's ranks had nothing to do with the mutiny. State prosecutors from the Department of Justice alleged that he and Honasan, PGEI founder, were part of the civilian component in the attempt to topple the then administration.

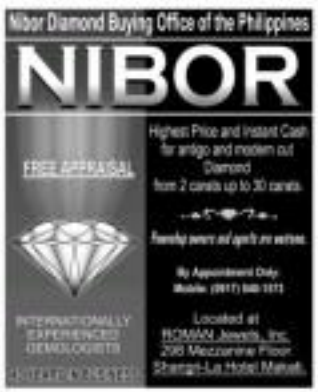
A total of 31 junior military officers are facing a separate trial in Honasan's court for the coup, which the supporters of Honasan claimed was their platform to seek power in the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Through the motion, Maceda ordered Judge Pilapil instead to compel Eagle Broadcasting Network, the media firm that owns radio Boo22, to give the court a copy of an interview with Maceda in the afternoon of July 28, 2003, the eve of the mutiny.

Down to 5

EMA-T and MIG-GIN were also asked to hand over to the court their interviews with Maceda in the morning of July 27, 2003, or the eve of Edsa Dos and Ayala Avenue, where the accused and his group has gathered for what he claimed was a rally against President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address that year.

Maceda is among the five remaining accused in the separate coup d'etat case filed by the DOJ in February against civilians allegedly involved in planning the mutiny. Charged along with Honasan were Wintrust and five other PGEI members. Pilapil, however, had dismissed the case against two of them—retired Col. Virgilio Briones and Lt. Col. Lorenzo Lanuza, citing a lack of probable cause.



Solon asks: Where is list of worst nursing schools?

By Philip C. Tubeza and Jerome Aning

THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER Education (CHED) should explain why it still had not published the list of nursing schools with the worst passing rates in the nursing licensure exams (NLE), Lawmakers said yesterday.

Cavadonga Rep. Joseph Santiago said a month had passed since Malacañang ordered the CHED and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) to "publicize fully" the list in order to forewarn parents against sending their children to nursing schools with dismal passing rates.

"There is already list, which can be published tomorrow if [CHED] so wants to," Santiago said in a statement.

He added that regulators should refrain from providing any "additional information whatsoever on the schools and their pass rates, and people allow the facts speak for itself."

Officials of top-rated institutions, including the University of the Philippines and University of Santo Tomas, earlier alleged that poor exam regulations had failed to check the spread of substandard nursing schools was because some of these supposedly had the backing of influential politicians.

Santiago endorsed his proposal for the CHED to "thoroughly review and pre-approve all advertisements put out by nursing schools."

Publish pass rates

He said the ad should "comprehensively include" the NLE pass rates of a school's graduates in the last five years.

"If only 20 percent of a school's graduates passed the NLE the first time they took it, this should be clearly included in the promotional materials," Santiago said.

Otherwise, the advertisement should not be allowed to run and the nursing school should be penalized promptly, he said.

He added that the CHED and the PRC should also start publishing, in at least five newspapers of general circulation, the pass rates of all schools in the NLE, which are given twice every year.

"Many young Filipinos aspire for good-quality nursing education because it offers them a way out of poverty and the opportunity to work in greener pastures. We must safeguard this hope and thrust by acting to it that falsely schools are planted out," Santiago said.

The labor group Trade Union Congress of the Philippines warned yesterday that nursing schools nationwide were overflowing with students while they could allow the quality of instruction they provide.

In June, enrollment of 386,571 students enrolled in 468 nursing schools nationwide. This translates to an average of 840 students per school, according to the CHED.

Purposeful steps

TUCP secretary general Ernesto Herrera said nursing education legislators should make "purposeful and adequate" steps so that students who are the answers to the country's shortage of nurses can receive proper training and pass the necessary professional skills.

Herrera said the problem was most severe in the third and fourth years of the nursing course, when students are required to spend more hours outside the classroom, performing hospital duty rounds, observing medical procedures and rendering in major as well as minor operations.

Republik simply do not have enough facilities or procedures to accommodate all the nursing students, he said.

How do you free a 'butanding'?

By Joanna Lyn Bunto
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY—A BUMMING (MALE whale) accidentally got caught in a fish corral in Albay, according to an environment official here.

In Bacon, veteran research specialist of the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources here, said fish corral owner Sonny Brandez called him up yesterday, asking for advice on how to free the creature, which has been trapped in the corral since Saturday.

The whale shark (Rhincodon typus) is in the corral in the coastal waters of Barangay Malobago in Manito.

According to Alcantara, the fish corral—which is 15-20 m in diameter and some 20 ft deep—is bigger than a full pen.

"I told Mr. Alcantara to release the trapped creature immediately if they can," Alcantara said. "It is important that they do not harm the creature during the release."

Should Alcantara be unable to set the gentle creature free, Boco said he would immediately form a group to help release it.

This was not the first time a butanding found itself trapped in a fish corral and then released.

In April 2005, Boco said a five-meter female whale was trapped in the fish corral of Mr. Cuenco for three days in Barangay Cawayan.

It was released through the efforts of the Navy Special Warfare Group (Seag) and the Bicol Arabs Divers Association Inc., whose public information officer happens to be Boco.

Sightings of whale sharks, considered as the world's largest fish, have been reported in other parts of the Albay Gulf.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, November 19, 2008
32nd Week in Ordinary Time
Alleluia Verse

1st Reading: Tit. 3:1-7
Gospel: Luke 17:11-19

One day on my Jerusalem, Jesus was passing along the border between Samaria and Galilee, and as he entered a village, ten lepers came to meet him, keeping their distance, they called to him, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" Then Jesus said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." Now, as they went their way, they found they were cured. One of them, on seeing he his cure by was cleansed, turned back praising God in a loud voice, and throwing himself on his face before Jesus, he gave him thanks. The man was a Samaritan.

Commentary:

We are to be especially respectful to public servants, whether they are our relatives or friends. Blessings that we can bring each God. We are to be obedient to officials in the government, but only in areas that do not contradict what God has clearly revealed in his word and light. The Holy Spirit that has given to us so that we might be witnesses on behalf of others. Jesus is not the last leper, one of whom is a Samaritan, a noble fault all of them. Only one returns the number—a gratitude, and dignity does.

Look at something that God has done for us in Jesus. Are we the one who tried to do something? Or are we like the other nine who took the generosity of life that was given and devoted it to ourselves and to our own pleasure in life?

4.4-quake jolts S. Luzon, metro; no damage reported

AN EARTHQUAKE GENERATED BY the Manila Trench was felt in parts of Occidental Mindoro in parts of Metro Manila yesterday, but there was no reported damage or casualty.

The 4.4-magnitude tectonic quake with a depth of 99 km was recorded at 8:30 a.m. with its epicenter located 82 km northwest of Mamburao, the capital of Occidental Mindoro, according to the Philippine Institute for Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

"We expect possible aftershocks but no damage," Phivolcs director Renato Solidum, told radio dzBB. He said there was no danger of a tsunami.

Intensity 3 was felt in Alaminos and Occidental Mindoro while intensity 4 was recorded in Manila. Intensity 3 was felt in Tagaytay, Makati and Quezon cities, Sta. Rosa, Laguna, and Lipa City in Batangas.

The quake was hardly felt in Cabuyao, Laguna, Antipolo City in Rizal and Batangas City, where Phivolcs recorded intensity 2.

Reaching 5,000 m in depth, the Manila Trench is an area under the South China Sea where the Eurasian plate is slipping beneath the Philippine plate, causing frequent earthquakes.

The plate movements have also been known to have caused the formation of arcs of volcanoes in Luzon, particularly Mt. Pinatubo, whose eruption in 1991 was considered one of the biggest on Philippine history.

The Philippine archipelago is located in the so-called Pacific "Ring of Fire," where volcanic activity and earthquakes are common. Blanche Rivera, with an AFP report

BI reminds aliens of I-Card deadline

By Leila B. Salaverria

THURSDAY IS IMMIGRATION YESTERDAY reminded foreigners residing in the Philippines that they only had until today to secure their I-Cards for they be arrested and deported for being undocumented aliens.

The deadline, which was moved several times, would no longer be extended, acting Immigration Commissioner Roy Almeda said.

In a statement, Almeda said the bureau had given foreigners enough time to get their I-Cards, which replaces the paper Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR) required of all foreign nationals residing in the country.

The I-Card, resembling an ATM card and which the BI has insisted is for simpler proof, is proof of a foreigner's legal residence status. I-Card holders need not secure exit or reentry permits from the BI when leaving the country.

Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. had earlier warned that aliens without an I-Card would be deported for violating the country's immigration laws.

As of Nov. 13, Almeda said, over 90,000 aliens had applied for the I-Card since the bureau launched the project last year. The number of applicants has exceeded the BI's target of 87,000 applicants, he added.

BI regional assistant Manuel Adaro reminded those who had applied for I-Cards but had not claimed them to pick them up. He said some 5,000 I-Cards were unclaimed.

He said aliens also need to get I-Cards because those are required when renewing or extending their visas. He said the paper ACRs would not be accepted for visa renewal.

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There are those who talk about quality and there are those who actually make that commitment to quality.

Quality may be subjective but in the context of standards, we at PHINMA Property Holdings Corporation (PPHC) have made that hope to align ourselves with international standards not just for our best above accreditation certificates - ISO 9001 for Quality Management, ISO 14001 for Environmental management and OHSAS 18001 for the Health and Safety management.

ISO 9001 for International Quality Standards.

A home is one of the largest investments most people make in their lives that's why value for money matters to most home buyers. We at PPHC make sure that we meet and exceed customer expectations in our housing units. Our ISO 9001 accreditation ensures we make that commitment to improving the quality of our products and services. All elements of quality management are incorporated to ensure that our housing units and services fit our customers requirements especially in achieving high levels of customer satisfaction.

ISO 14001 for International Environmental Standards.

PPHC is your partner in the process of building and living in quality homes and communities. We at PPHC have also made sure that our social responsibility in preserving the environment is part of this process. PPHC is not just a developer and marketer but also a builder of homes. By working to meet the international standards of ISO 14001, we have developed a rigorous and complete review of our waste management and use of environmentally safe materials. Not only does this help protect our environment but also our workers and ultimately the residents who will live in our master planned communities.

OHSAS 18001 for International Health and Safety Standards.

Quality is vital throughout the housing construction process. Customer expectations are constantly on the rise but we at PPHC have set benchmark of safety not only for our engineers and workers who strive to deliver quality units, but also for our buyers and residents who move in to their new communities. With our OHSAS 18001 accreditation, we've put in place a systematic and documented approach to ensuring safety within our work and living environments. Our accreditation for triple safety standards aims to reduce and eliminate accidents and setbacks, and achieve efficiency through reduced cycle time. These translate not only to safe environments for our buyers but also to cost savings we pass on to them.

PHINMA Marks 50th Anniversary

The country's leading conglomerate, the Philippine Investment Management, Inc. (PHINMA), is celebrating it's golden anniversary today.

PHINMA's affordable housing business is being carried out through its wholly owned subsidiary PHINMA Property Holdings Corp. (PPHC). PPHC is the first and only triple certified developer in the country having been recently certified for ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001. Also recognized a "Superbrand" by SuperBrands Philippines, PPHC has become the leading affordable medium-rise housing in Metro Manila with more than 4,000 affordable condominium units to date.

PPHC will be launching three new projects this year and will build up to six condominium projects by 2009 to keep the PPHC's vow 'til next century.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Condemned

EDITORIAL

WHO CAN FORGET THE MANNER IN WHICH the American Chamber of Commerce lavished praise on Ferdinand Marcos for proclaiming martial law? Back then, it breathlessly sang the praises of dictatorship: "[AmCham] wishes you every success in your endeavors to restore peace and order, business confidence economic growth and the well-being of the Filipino people and nation. We assure you of our confidence and cooperation in achieving those objectives. We are communicating these feelings to our associates and affiliates in the United States."

But a lot has happened since then, not least a generational shift in the attitude that businessmen can afford to ignore what goes on around them. If the businessmen of the past embraced martial law because it made business (and union-busting) easier, foreign businessmen in the Philippines today won't have any of it. The Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce (JFC) in the Philippines, composed of business groups from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Europe, Japan and Korea, and the Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters have bluntly called upon President Macapagal-Arroyo to put an end to political killings or risk losing aid and investments. "For the sake of justice and to deter continued killings, those murders should be investigated thoroughly and those found responsible punished under the law," they said.

They also expressed impatience over the Melo Commission's slow pace in investigating hundreds of cases of extrajudicial killings of leftist activists and journalists. "They prodded the commission "to hasten the investigations and ... to bring an end to a serious blemish on the country's national image, which could impact negatively on future foreign investment and foreign economic assistance."

Representatives of US-based apparel companies such as Gap, Polo Ralph Lauren, Wal-Mart, Liz Claiborne, American Eagle Outfitters, Jones Apparel Group and Phillips Van Heusen made a similar appeal in a letter to the President. The apparel firms are particularly interested in the murder of Aglipayan Bishop Alberto Ramento and reports of violent attacks against striking workers at the Cavite Economic Zone (CEZ). Neither activist battles, such as Ramento's, nor striking workers would seem to be the kind of people investors care about. Marcos secured the support of foreign businessmen during his time, precisely by being intolerant when it came to organized labor. But this time around, businessmen have thrown their weight behind the cause of human rights.

Perhaps now, the government will take notice and recognize what an international scandal human rights abuses in our country has become. When Philippine media, academe, civil society and the churches denounced the killings, the administration insisted, on one hand, that it let us bring them, and accused its critics of being disloyal to the republic. We would have thought that the rude shock the President received in Europe—where, instead of being lionized, she was excoriated for the escalation of political killings under her watch—would have convinced her that killers shouldn't be able to act with impunity. The situation, however, if not entirely going from bad to worse, has stayed quite bad—and many people and groups keep adding their voices to the protests.

These businessmen know that their shareholders are sensitive to allegations that pursuing profit comes at a high human rights cost. The shibboleth of free trade is honored by the concept of fair trade, among other things. And there is a growing list of large and small American and European enterprises that have had to deal with shareholder revolts over their indifference toward human rights. Word of workers being harassed by agents of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority and the Cavite police, for example, might make companies operating in special economic zones the target of media scrutiny amid allegations of complicity in union-busting.

As things now stand, there will be greater pressure to bring outsourced jobs back to America in the wake of the Republican defeat in the mid-term elections. Activists could find a willing ally in American unions taking up the cry of pulling out of a Philippines that treats workers just a little better than animals. And European public opinion, as the President has found out, has a tremendous effect on official opinion with regard to governments that violate human rights.

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2 ex-cops vie for Manila mayor

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

TWO EX-POLICEMEN WILL BE THE LEADING contenders for the position of mayor of Manila that Lito Atienro will vacate next year. Sen. Ping Lacson, former chief of the Philippine National Police, and Sen. Panfilo Lacson, former Manila mayor, former chief of the Manila Police Department, and former director of the National Bureau of Investigation, are friends and allies in the Senate but, like a plot in a movie, they will be forced to go against each other in next year's elections because they happen to want the same position at the same time.

Of course, other politicians have also announced their own plans to run for the mayor of Manila (former First Lady Imelda Marcos, former Rep. Mark Jimenez, Vice Mayor Danny Lacuna, Mr Asturias, son of the mayor), Rep. Amy Hontiveros, Rep. Rudy Barrios and Mary "Beautrol" Ong (who announced her candidacy right after Lacson did), but political observers believe that the real fight would be among Lacson, Lim and Asturias, the latter simply because he has the political machine of his father behind him. The rest would be just "eating peas."

Perhaps it is fitting that two former police men will be contending for the mayorship [had first, Nelson Batchelor, into a former Manila policeman, not dead, the fight would have been among three ex-cops: former Mayor Batchelor's major problems: corruption and crime. Lim is now in Quezon City, which is much bigger in area, Manila has the most number of squatters. It has traffic problems almost everywhere and plenty of snatchers and pickpockets in its shopping districts. Driving (selling stolen goods) is an important occupation on Santa Ana ave and in the Quiapo-Sta. Cruz area.

During his term, Lim was able to improve discipline on his countrymen, especially in the tourist-entertainment areas, as well as to commence campaign against drugs, which Mayor Atienza escalated. "Tony Boy's" term of office [when] Mayor Atienza's beautification projects and revival of the city's decaying districts have earned the praise and admiration not only of Manilenos but also of outsiders who come to Manila to do business or shop. Ermita has done a good job fighting up [sorwalk] along Roxas Boulevard, except that the promenade inside the area has now been blocked by trees and rows of restaurants. "You cannot see the sea now the famous Manila Bay cannot anymore," many people complain. All you see are the restaurants lining the promenade beside the bay but there is no need for them because the other side of the boulevard is already full of restaurants, nightclubs and eating places. "Give us back the sea and the Manila Bay sunset," people say.

No doubt, Lim and Asturias had done the most for the people of Manila but Lacson promises even more. He offers to give them 100% health, Online Program and Medicaid. Lacson also promised to stop corruption, which is endemic in all local governments. Manila is divided, as well as the culture of getting duke from businessmen and the government. Like Lim, Lacson does not collect his pork barrel allocation, the source of dishes and corruption for everyone and congressmen.

Lacson announced his candidacy in Baguio as Manila with prominent opposition congressmen's heads: Edcel Lagman, Teodoro Casiño, Rodolfo Zamora, Ruben Ducleo and Teodoro Cataquina (I) as well as his handlers. Naturally, he was asked about his friend Lim who, in earlier appearances in the Equitan, had repeatedly said that he was determined to run for mayor. Lim, asked about Lacson's announcement, had answered in the evening that morning, had said then that he had an agreement with the latter that if one of them decided to run for mayor, the other would. "What happened to that agreement?" Lacson was asked.

"It was not an agreement," Lacson replied. "It was more of how an understanding."

He explained that during a difficult time deciding whether to run for mayor or for reelection in the Senate, when the answers put him among the first half-dozen. Finally, it was a priest (or a bishop) who convinced him to run for the mayoralty. Lacson interpreted this as "coming from God," and because the "voice of God" and an "understanding" with a fellow senator, whom should one follow?

Lacson supporters are hoping that this same God would also show Lim the light to give way to the former. After all, Lacson's term is expiring next year while Lim has until 2010 to serve as mayor.

The trouble is both of them are tired of the Senate. "There is nothing but diddlers there," Lim once told the Kapihan. Lacson also told the Kapihan about the slow pace in the Senate. As former policemen, both of them want action and results. And as chief administrator of a city, they can make things happen quickly. As a senator, you are just one of 24 trying to make your voice heard, they said. But as mayor, you are the chief executive of your city, and in the case of Manila, that is a stepping stone to Malacañang.

In fact, Malacañang is only a few steps away from Manila's City Hall, both literally and figuratively. Any popular Manila mayor is always a contender in the presidential derby and further [about] of Lim make good as the city's chief executive, could easily be a shoo-in, hop, skip and jump to the palace.

There are rumors (still unconfirmed) that a GMA emissary had offered to back Lacson as presidential candidate in 2010 if he would agree to lead the administration senatorial slate next year, but his adviser is reportedly told him: "Coming from an indicted Jim Ivey on you be never made an offer? Most likely, she won't be in any position to make promises for 2010."

Two cases

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THE FIRST CASE HAS TO DO WITH THE Marines who are currently under detention in Fort San Felipe, Cavite City. Tuesday last week was the 55th anniversary of the Marines. I don't know that they had much to celebrate.

The country has only two living Marines who have received the Medal of Honor for bravery. They are Lt. Col. Ariel O. Querubin and Capt. Gumersindo P. Pascua Jr. Querubin was given the medal for leading his men against the heavily fortified MILF camp, dislodged the latter from their stronghold many times, and for his new held their ground, in great personal risk. Querubin drew enemy fire to himself to expose the enemy's position. They continued to hold their ground despite several injuries sustained by the enemy. After their reinforcements arrived, they subdued the camp.

Pascua got his medal for rescuing the injured bishop ret.Lt. Luis Anthony Red II. His citation reads almost like an FPJ movie. In the course of a three-day engagement with the bandits, Pascua's unit was pinned down by enemy fire. Pascua crawled toward the enemy under cover of grass and bush and took out the enemy single-handedly. When reinforcements arrived, they rescued the disoriented camp and rescued Red.

Both Querubin and Pascua are currently detained in the maximum security prison in Cavite, along with four of their shot decorated Marines.

The other case has to do with Bishop Teresito "Boy" Soriano. Who is Bishop Soriano? Well, you must have lived in the mountains or some obscure cave not to know all this time to our basic line. You don't even have to be a graduate of the University of the Philippines to know him. Though Bishop sees at one point the UP president. He encouraged the graduating class of '06 to come to the harassed political scientists in this country. His academic credentials are formidable, and well-known beyond this country's borders.

He has never hidden his activist bent, but has openly expressed it. It was evident in his homily. In the past, that was regarded as a luxury to be an activist while an academic meant to practice at one pretended. It meant to stop being academic while being an academic. Today, that is regarded as a crime, unless it is committed by a member of the military. Then it is regarded as a crime, unless it is committed by a member of the military. Then it is regarded as a crime, unless it is committed by a member of the military. Then it

Overconfidence bugs opposition parties

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY SPLIT OF THE 83 Congress has given the frustrated Philippine opposition parties the heady result of taking control of Congress in the May 2007 mid-term elections. They can barely expect voters to distrust a dizzying political rebuff to President Macapagal-Arroyo such as the one American voters gave US President George W. Bush.

US elections have had an important impact on the broad range of Philippine-American security and economic relations. Last year, a change of administration in the United States and of control of Capitol Hill have determined whether a more friendly president is in the White House or a more friendly party has control of Congress. The US elections have had a non-point influence on the outcome of Philippine elections. The Democrats' electoral triumph on the Philippine opposition parties is no stronger than atmospheric-inspiring hopes that the US poll results would have a reinforcing effect on the Nov elections.

Prior to the US elections, Philippine opposition parties had increasingly been led to believe that by the end of the year, the political terrain, that they would win the majority in the Senate. The 20 persons who polled highest in the survey of possible senatorial candidates are identified with the opposition or anti-Arroyo.

These survey results, reflected in no future than a year ago, have led such opposition stalwarts as Senator Juan Ponce Enrile to predict 12 Overup in May. With nothing more solid to support this prediction, opposition quarters have claimed that there is now a scramble for places in the opposition lineup. Everyone, it is assumed, wants to swim with the anti-Arroyo current now there the tough politics of drafting the slate to "unwinnable" candidates.

Prior to the last US elections, the anti-Arroyo forces, both in the opposition parties and various civil society groups, have reinforced their belief that the administration was headed for a slaughter in May, following its intensifying setbacks in the series of Supreme Court decisions striking down the people's initiative petition, the presidential proclamation declaring a national emergency but following, and various security measures, including the ban against officials testifying to congressional investigations without presidential permission and the crackdown on anti-government rallies.

The repressive measures taken by the administration in connection with its command, control, emergency campaign have highlighted by the subsequent decisions of the Court have rapid to send the administration. They added to the damage inflicted on the administration by the Garci-Lacson tapes, which tended to prove allegations of presidential tampering with the results of the 2004 elections. Also, the killings of hundreds of unarmed leftist militants by unidentified death squads during the past six months have further damaged the administration.

Although the President's approval rating has recently dropped to months, she has not reversed the trend significantly. Even those court and the recent setbacks in the Supreme Court, the opposition has established a unapplicated basis to claim that it presently enjoys clear leadership in Congress and that the President is the minority. But these conditions are not enough to ensure an opposition sweep in Congress, especially in the Senate.

The opposition has a big problem. Behind-the-scenes campaigning is linked for the Senate and has become well-challenging the Lakas machine, the opposition is already bracing with unbounded overconfidence. It is infected with the deadly virus that sapped its presidential campaign in 2004.

Then, opposition quarters thought that Fernando Poe Jr. was invincible, and grossly underestimated the incumbent, President Arroyo, the advantages of incumbency and the well-funded and patronage resources of the Lakas machine. The Poe machine lost enough in the last few days of the campaign to go down to defeat.

Opposition stalwarts have conceded that they have to get their act together. There may be a scramble for places in their tickets, but forming a ticket is not as simple as filling up vacant slots. A ticket presents a program of alternative policy directions, and the candidates must be sympathetic, supportive and equitable portions of the voters' administration. That ticket has to bring together candidates with compatible policy views and not just a hodge-podge of personalities lining in all directions. The latter would be a recipe for political chaos, not for policy contrast or alternatives.

Even if the opposition is able to put together a balanced ticket, it still has to manage the opposition lineup. Though still popular with the masses, Estrada is an albatross for the opposition. He is not an inspiring symbol of change.

It would be best for the opposition to disentangle the impeachment of the administration's allies from the impeachment of the administration's chief executive. The Lakas machine has not been tainted. The opposition parties are fractured and short of patronage resources. The machine is critically important in congressional and local races.

If the aim of the opposition is to shore up its democratic space, the House should be the target of the opposition. The antagonistic tenor sets the decisive battleground for a tentative clash of power outfits. It's the outcome of elections for the House seats that will decide whether the Arroyo presidency will be a dead duck after May and no longer a issue duck.

Another Balkan high noon

WORLD VIEW

Marites Dañguilan Vitug and Jaime Licas

WITH THE WORLD FOCUSED ON IRAQ, NORTH Korea and a possible clash with Iran over nuclear weapons, Kosovo has fallen off the radar screen. That notwithstanding will end soon, a decision about the province's fate is looming.

The United States and its European friends have unequivocally stated their wishes under the difficult decision before the end of the year on whether to separate Kosovo from Serbia. The decision—crucial to the future of an unstable region—is about business determination and treaty.

Negotiations this year in Vienna, facilitated by the UN envoy Martti Ahtisaari, have failed to produce agreement between Serbia and Kosovo on "final status" and set happen. Talks continue, but, as UN negotiator and former Finnish President Marti Ahtisaari diplomatically told the Security Council, they are effectively dead.

Ahtisaari's report will appear to Kosovo's independence, because unfavorable remains the dominant political force in the country. Indeed, Prime Minister Hashim Thaci, the speaker of Serbian nationalism, has been crying in every area to unilaterally declare independence if the UN envoy's report failed a national referendum on a new constitution without serious parliamentary debate or the usual public education. The main purpose of his new constitution is to persuade, which continues Kosovo as an indissoluble part of Serbia.

The Kosovo Albanians have already proclaimed that they will not accept any set to Serbia, no matter how tenuous. The regime the 1990s, they rejected United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 as a binding parallel instrument. They forced mass exodus in 1999 and Nato's subsequent intervention, which led to the UN administration, has made anything other than independence intolerable.

Some time over the next month or two, the Balkan Contact Group—the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and Russia—will meet to discuss the report of Ahtisaari. The group will then forward status and possibly propose a solution to the Security Council, which must settle the final decision. In public, all Contact Group members have stood to leave the question of Kosovo's final status open, but informally the United States and some of the European countries are that they will propose independence this year.

Some members of the Security Council, particularly Russia and China, are opposed to or skeptical of an imposed settlement, and few governments have dividing up another country's territory. Instead, they support the continuation of the status quo. Security Council will approve independence largely depends on securing a Russian veto, which will require considerable diplomatic effort.

The outcast of the independence bestowed is also important. Kosovo's northern Kosovo must be secured and its minorities protected. Northern Kosovo, now largely under Belgrade's control, must not be partitioned off in all but name. In the interest of reducing the flow to Serbia, the Security Council must avoid granting independence in a way that is construed that the non-state can and effectively funded.

If the Security Council fails to reach a decision on final status, it will produce a grave situation. Kosovo would declare independence unilaterally, and all nations would have to make up their mind whether or not to recognize the new state. In that scenario, it is likely that the body of North Kosovo would declare their own independence. At a minimum, Serbia would campaign strongly against recognition.

In fact, Serbia's government is already trying to persuade the West to postpone a decision until mid-2007. A change of Kosovo's status, Serbian officials, the ultra-nationalist Radical Party will come to power in the next elections, and believe that holding elections so early in this year will cause the Contact Group to delay a proposal in the Security Council. Moreover, the government has encouraged the leaders of Bosnia's Republika Srpska in Dayton to hold their own referendum on separation from a still fragile Bosnia. And they continue to push—unsuccessfully—for Ahtisaari's mission to be in parallel with the Vienna talks.

The timing of this counter-attack advocates appears to be a part of this delaying strategy. Some hope that post-poponed will stimulate violence in Kosovo and further encourage Western reconsideration of independence.

That is not going to happen. Many European Union countries are worried about the implications of taking away a country's territory, as well as the impact of Kosovo's independence on Serbian democracy. Given Serbia's political instability that question the basis of a direct threat—religious—allow nearly unlimited. Any delay only offers more room for Russians to find ways to make a break by Council decision more difficult.

The West must ignore Belgrade's siren song. Serbian policies will be chaotic and unstable for the foreseeable future. The Kosovo Albanians will attempt to pursue this as an excuse to avoid facing the loss of Kosovo. Likewise, there will be problems establishing ties between Serbia and Kosovo under any circumstances.

But failure to proceed definitively now on Kosovo's final status will prolong the Balkan situation, one that blocks Serbia's move toward the West and ultimate membership in the EU, condemns Kosovo's ethnic minorities to dangerous ambiguity and imperils fragile states like Bosnia and Macedonia.

Only a decision on Kosovo exists its future but independence. If Serbia wants to join the West, it must not forsake that opportunity by trapping itself in an untenable past.

Project Syndicate

Marites Dañguilan, a former US assistant secretary of state, is a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. Jaime Licas is special Balkans adviser for the Brussels-based Crisis Group and resident in Belgrade.

How do we keep traditions alive?

LOOKING BACK

Antonio H. Geronimo

LAST YEAR, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT organized a cultural forum, and one of its members was set in the newly opened Hong Kong Disneyland Hotel. When the invitation was brought to my attention, I did not even waste my own time for reasons I was supposed to be "Disneyland Scrooge." I was then reminded that the venue was Disneyland and was told, "But it is tempting here." To which I replied, "Bah, and humbug."

Disneyland didn't woo me on appreciation plus for a discussion on culture in June all right, but the venue remained a no-no. Nevertheless, I thought I had been to the original one in Anaheim and the larger one in Florida, was that I just had to have Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck speaking in Chinese. This would be a great example of globalization. Secondly, I wanted to see for myself how our cultural treasures were doing there, particularly native members of our national ballet company who shed their classical get-up to become dancing toreros.

Last week, the fourth Asian Cultural Forum was again organized under the leadership of Dr. Ho Kwok Ping, Hong Kong's richest man. Again, I who has a soft spot for Filipinos not only because there is a large on-par community there but simply because he is an unabashed opera-trained soprano, was not always how Dad. He once maintained a clinic in downtown Ocampo Road where a lot of artists were regular patients.

It's his year the theme for the 2006 forum is "Asian Arts: Culture and Modernity," and his staff provided guide questions beforehand so we could have points for discussions. I felt the questions were quite revealing not just about the state of modernity but rather what I have the impression revealed the forum to be about. There were many that explored the relationship between modernization and globalization, which led me to look into our experience and ask how Western, and we are. Where are we and where are we going? To move the discussion forward I proposed that the question should be: Where do we want to position ourselves?

Similarly the issue of East and West goes way beyond the famous quote from Rudyard Kipling. The issue of East and West actually depends on where you stand and how his Eastern West you are looking because in the end everything comes full circle. The world has become a smaller place with the Internet and other IT solutions are like it or not, we have become global and it does not make sense to go against what is inevitable.

Rather than fight the tide, we must be able to swim with the flow and survive we can maximize our distinct national identities in the midst of a growing homogenization of the world. Thus, of course, what is at issue for many is the fact that when we talk about Westernization and globalization, we often mean the unruly Americanization of our youth and our world.

Culture is often overlooked when considering plans for development, as the arts are usually seen as luxuries, frills and other barnacles that make the economy move, but then culture is an integral part of development and it is in this area that we are acutely damage and transformation is evaluated as extremely induced changes.

Thus, the issue of modernization or losing contemporary in culture and the area is acutely sensitive's mode of adaptation to changing imperatives like Westernization or globalization. What is important here is to see whether the responses that occur in this process are positive, negative, equal or unequal. Rather than ignoring that from West, the modern from the old, we should foster the reciprocal relationship to see ongoing fusion or convergence in cultures.

While most people are resilient in the context of music, the visual and performing arts, we would like to see our traditions to cultural heritage both tangible and intangible, because it is here that is subject to rapid change these days. Cultural heritage is often at risk and needs to be nurtured and protected because at times some aspects or manifestations of cultural heritage disappear or are transformed so quickly that society and we in danger of being discarded for something new or modern.

In our cities and urban centers, we are often faced with the dilemma of what to tear down or old or restore to make way for more new, what to keep and what to discard. Preservation and protection for adaptive reuse. In the Philippines, we have seen the modern completely engulf where monuments, sites and structures have been declared, classified and graded in terms of historical or architectural. The last continues to grow in spite of the many legal difficulties in doing.

If we are to study heritage at risk, we must take the obvious example, the rice terraces declared by Unesco as a World Heritage site. The terraces were built over the centuries, carved out of mountains, to provide food for people in the remote areas of the Cordillera. Today, many of these terraces are falling into disuse as younger people leave their villages in search of greener pastures. Why stay in these terraces when they have been declared, classified and graded in terms of historical or architectural. The last continues to grow in spite of the many legal difficulties in doing.

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Four gods

MOST POLITICAL COMMENTARIES ON THE LAST ELECtions in the United States focused on the victory of the liberal Democrats over the conservative Republicans. But my American friends, most of whom are, well, liberals and Democrats, have been pointing out that you can be a conservative Democrat and that many of the winners were in as well as a liberal (note to self: Republicans). What is why I thought readers might be interested in the results of a recent survey by Baylor University.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

In Texas, where an institute of Religion has been conducting public opinion surveys for several years now.

Baylor conducted its telephone survey. The latest survey, released in September, focused on American concepts of God, which the social scientists found to center on political views as well.

Big picture

Let's get a big picture first of the four Gods that come up in the surveys, as we can through the conclusions, you might want to think of your own notions of God.

The researchers found that 31 percent of their respondents see God as an Authoritarian God, who influences global as well as personal events and is often angry. Not surprisingly, most of these also tend to believe in the death penalty, who support the war in Iraq.

The next who believes in an Authoritarian God are the Engaged group, which might explain why George W. Bush was able to get re-elected in 2004, and why his policies on Iraq were so uncritically supported—until recently.

The survey did find that 24 percent of respondents believe in a Distant God, who sets the laws of nature in motion but does not actively intervene in the world. Obviously such a God would not be angry or punishing.

The Distant God believers are about the same in number as those who believe in a Benevolent God, one who does intervene in our daily lives, but not in anger or in retribution. The Benevolent God believers accounted for 23 percent of respondents. As you might have guessed, the Distant God and Benevolent God believers are less likely to support the death penalty. People with higher incomes, and higher education also tend toward concepts of a Distant God and Benevolent God, which makes you wonder about how religious values in the name of wanted we have over our own lives and environments.

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Take and religion

I was constantly timed to the US National Public Radio during the last election campaign and I could run over variations and configurations in the intersection between religion and politics. An example comes out of the "conservatives" Sun Belt and the Republican Party had pinned their hopes on. Usually, the conservative agenda, which links to the notions of an Authoritarian God, is associated with support for the death penalty. America was intervention in Iraq, opposition to abortion and gay marriages.

But Kansas began to emerge in the last elections, such as conservative who were opposed to abortion but felt more compassion was needed for gays, including possible support for gay marriages. There were, too, conservative evangelicals who were beginning to question the role of government in politics, and their scope, their power, were beginning to corrupt Christianity. Rick Warren, who was in the Philippines recently is one of those conservative pastors who is talking more now about environment issues and issues.

There were more than to tell the time of the type of God Americans believe in. The votes definitely related to broader concepts about how our founders and religious values may affect our politics. Some of the "values" issues that religious conservatives also speak out now for environmental conservation. A campaign just used two or three years ago, "What Would Jesus Drive?" speculated that if Christ were here today, he wouldn't be driving a gas-guzzling Ford Expedition or one of the other SUVs. The campaign said he'd drive a small or vehicle—or take public transport and walk.

Pluralism

The Baylor study reminds us that there are many different types of beliefs in God, and in the supernatural. If similar studies were conducted in Asia, we'd find even more variation. Buddhism, for example, is basically non-theistic; it doesn't talk about a creator God, or about a God intervening in people's lives. The Buddhas are not gods, they were humans who had managed to break free from the cycles of reincarnation by eliminating all attachments to the material.

Here at the level of popular culture, many Buddhists go pray to the Buddhas much as Christians would talk to God, asking for help, or there we are some kind of an intervening God.

The Social Weather Stations has conducted surveys in the past on how Filipinos perceive their own religiosity and, as expected, the majority see themselves as very religious. But I'd like to see surveys on specific beliefs and practices, including our conceptions of God, and how this might shape our behaviors or even religious spheres of life.

I suspect the majority of Filipinos believe in a somewhat distant but interviewing God. Identify a type in the stereotyped sense. Personal disasters and personal misfortunes are often seen as punishment for our sins. But we also have our own relationships with God as negotiable. We bargain all the time, vowing to do several or more or less ourselves unless the crisis is over, reconciliation that a certain favor is granted. Often curious to see what we bargain for as well. From admittedly unscientific eavesdropping on people's conversations, I've heard it all: from priests asking to be blessed with a new car to students asking to pass a particularly difficult subject. As we work on praying for more successes.

We are nevertheless, but we are believe in all powerful terms. I suspect the belief in the Trinity divine as to believe in an unfathomable distant God the Father, and a more interesting human-sized God the Son, including the way he was: his life, Mass or Holy Child.

Then there are the Virgin Mary and a plethora of saints, who act as intercessors or go-betweens. One can invoke all sorts of help for selected in our beliefs in an authoritative God, but we are less, a mainstream society where reasons can be very personal, and that is reflected in our Manila Mary complex.

And we haven't even gone into Filipino animist beliefs that see the human world as constantly interacting with other worlds of supernatural and preternatural spirits, benevolent and malevolent.

Perhaps ultimately, we need to understand not so much how the Filipino looks at God, than our interpretation of morality, of what is right and what is forbidden ("sin" or wrong-doing). Maybe the tension can't so much be seen as Authoritarian and Benevolent God than between ideas of "personal" and "social" sin. When we see sin mainly in terms of having missed Mass, or using the contraceptive pill, then we lose sight of the need to address social sin, such as cheating in elections, stealing through corruption, failing to provide decent employment for billion Filipinos.

This cause is worth a song

IT WARMED MY HEART THAT LOCAL offending children were featured on the front page of the Inquirer's June 7 issue.

I am 37 years old and I must certainly agree with what Loretta Ann Rosales of the Children and Youth Organization in Bagong Silang is campaigning for...an end to the physical and emotional punishment of children. Growing up in Diapid Dapitan, so to this very community, I too exposed to the grossest punishments children experience in their homes, community and workplace. I have witnessed some of the violent acts parents do to their children in the name of discipline and "love." It hurts me to think that our culture permits these acts and puts those who do the best protection by readily answering how such violent acts sometimes grandpa to raising well-disciplined and well-behaved children.

I am one of the vocalists of a band called Joint One and being a musician, I write and sing compositions focusing on children. I personally interpreted the song "Si Bong," one of the 20 original compositions in Joint One's second album, "Mga Bagong Bayanihan, Mga Bagong Liberig." The song talks about the physical abuse that old drew experience in. able o place that is supposed to be their safest sanctuary—their homes.

LETTERS

We truly believe that a crime such as what the children of Bagong Silang are protesting is a crime not only worth fighting for but also worth a song that the entire world should hear. We are one with them in telling the stories of children who have experienced and continue to experience punishment. And we willingly extend a helping hand to put an end to this culture of violence.

We denounce the physical and emotional punishment of children. We want a full stop to all forms of child abuse. It's about time that children stand up and be heard, and we thank the heavens for giving us the opportunities.

—LAARNI ESPAÑOL,
vocalist, Joint One,
Joint One Youth Organization,
Block 23, Lot #2-#3, Phase 2, Area 2,
Maya-Maya St., Bagong Silang,
Novaliches, Metro Manila

The real deceivers in Cha-cha debate

THIS REFERS TO EDGARDO TILLO JR.'S LETter titled "Aguas should stop deceiving the people," PDI, 11/4/06). Out of curiosity, I would like to know if Tillo voted for Joseph Estrada or Fernando Poe Jr. for president? One of the primary objectives of Charter change is to eliminate potential national leaders who would rule to victory purely on the wings of popularity instead of competence.

A prime minister will have to prove his merits before his peers and cannot simply rely on the adoring masses. I was open-eye-eyed and saw the true deceivers of this move, Charter change.

It is the religious leaders who still lose their influence once candidates no longer have to campaign on a national basis. It is the show biz politicians who feed all they need to do is dance their way in rallies to get elected. It is the business community which stands to lose millions if no candidates exist nationwide. It is the Supreme Court justices who nitpick on the validity of signatures instead of basing the foresight to let the Filipino people decide this issue once and for all. It is the senators who think of only the million they spend to get themselves elected instead of what's good for the country. Lastly and sadly, it is civil society which joined in ousting Estrada yet had to see the need to overhaul the form of government that created him.

No, the Filipino people have been fooled. Unfortunately, the real deceivers have yet to be fully unmasked.

—ROGER SANTIBÁÑEZ,
95 Aplaya St., Mandaluyong City

Please do not add to the confusion

IN A SENSE, IT IS CONFUSING TO THINK that girls would be recruited as boy scouts. (PDI, 11/9/06) Has the Boy Scouts of the Philippines lost its core boys?

I am more concerned though with the lack of flexibility among the leaders of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines. Girls nowadays are showing physical capabilities that 30-35 years ago nobody thought they could have.

One time, I played basketball with elementary girls and, boy, they were better than my son, all I'm saying is that the GSP should also give some thought about adapting its programs for the girls of today. Imagine the confusion if the GSP would follow suit and accept boys as girl scouts.

This is already a confusing world that our children live in today. We should not add to the confusion by being reluctant in absolute expansion such as the BSP and GSP.

—EDGARDO GARAUDEL,
6871 San Isidro Village, Ilaya,
Los Baños, Laguna

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Excess Pantabangan water released

Dam officials in Nueva Ecija ordered the release of water at the Pantabangan Dam reservoir due to the dam's increasing water level and fears of more heavy rains before the year ends.

Floods won't hit farms, residents assured

By Analou Bajo
Inquirer Central Luzon

CABANATUAN CITY—DAM OFFICIALS IN NUEVA Ecija on Tuesday ordered the continuous release of water at the Pantabangan Dam reservoir due to the dam's increasing water level and fears of more heavy rains before the year ends.

The water release, at 200 cubic meters per second (cmps), started Tuesday and this may increase to 300 cmps depending on the volume of water that enters the reservoir these coming days, said Antonio Nangel, operations manager of the Upper Pampanga River Integrated Irrigation System (UPRIIS).

Nangel said the reservoir's level has reached 220.8 meters or just 9.2 meter from the 221-meter spilling level.

Residents in the low-lying areas of Nueva Ecija, especially in the southern part of the province, expressed fears of flooding that might endanger their lives, their farm animals and their property.

Nangel said it was the first time that the water level at the UPRIIS became Pantabangan reservoir rose to this level since the dam's operation in 1972.

The highest level reached by the dam's reservoir at this time is 221.2 meters, on years was 200 meters, he said.

"We want to preclude a super abundance of water supply at the dam's reservoir and release it in big volume afterwards. So we decided to release water starting this week," he said.

He allayed fears of residents about possible flooding in any areas in the province.

"The supposed rate of water in the river downstream is only equivalent to a meter deep. Our monitoring showed that the current water flow in the rivers in Nueva Ecija are only knee deep or very deep until we expect that no village or vast land would be hit by flood," he said.

Nangel asked residents to alert his office if they noticed flooding in their areas.

He said the unprecedented release of water in the Pantabangan dam reservoir was due to the inflow of river water from Nueva Vizcaya that passed through a tunnel.

The 27-km tunnel is one of the main features of the Caranglan Madapo para Irrigation and Drainage Project (CMIPP) in Nueva Vizcaya, which is meant to augment water supply in the Pantabangan dam reservoir.

He said there was nothing to worry about the safety of the dam.

"It is structurally strong. We are constantly checking its structure," he said.

In Bulacan, local officials assured residents and farmers in the province that they would be safe as Pantabangan Dam releases water for two weeks.

Rodolfo Santos, chief of the provincial disaster coordinating council, said Bulacan residents, especially those living in areas on the boundary with Pampanga and those living in areas with low elevation, should not worry about the water release. With a report from Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon

More groups respond to Sorsogon call for help

SORSOGON CITY—MORE groups have responded to the call for help for victims of Typhoon "Milenyo" in this province.

The most recent donors were the Ermita-Malate of Ramon Magsaysay member Antonio Mehito and the Project Miracle of former John Hancocks, a senior partner of Pinto and Pinto Law Office and corporate secretary and director of Lafayette Phils. Inc.

Project Miracle was launched Nov. 8 in Manila during a fund-raising concert of singer Sharon Cuneta, who was one of the supporters of the project.

In attendance during the launching were Sorsogon City Mayor Sally Lee, Legazpi City Mayor Noel Rosal, Legazpi Vice Mayor Nes Salazar, Lin Nelson and Dylan Wilk of Carmel-Kalinga, Rotary Club Legazpi Central president Jessie Galvanta, MMM, Chair Ramel Fernandez and wife—Mia Reese City Mayor Marilyn Ylagan-Escudero of the Philippines national president Jerry Salazar and 189 immediate past president Joel Cadiz.

Antonio said Project Miracle aims to raise at least P6 million for the education of residents displaced by Milenyo in the cities of Sorsogon and Legazpi.

The group seeks to build 300 houses for each of the city.

Surviving and education would keep residents out of harm's way during typhoons and other calamities.

"Instead of just giving them relief goods, why not give them a permanent resettlement away from the hazards of living along the sea coasts," Antonio said.

The funds to be raised by Project Miracle would pass through the Carmel-Kalinga, which also held its launching here Sunday.

CK executive director Michele said local chief executives, led by Lee, were enthusiastic about the project.

Among the areas that would benefit from the CK program are Pilotin Gitas, Oakhill, Buenavista, Bolinao, Irosin, Bulusan and Donsol towns, and Sorsogon City. Bobby Q. Ladaban, Inquirer Southern Luzon

DEBRIS Hours Lahnet in Sorsogon City shortly after it was hit by Typhoon "Milenyo."

[HERO] A resident in Sorsogon City is in tears with her gasoline, gift certificates and rosaries.

Ex-congressman says 'traitors' put him out of power as Manila legislator

DEGOS CITY—FORMER Abakada Rep. Mark Jiménez played early Santa to the people of this city and other areas of Davao del Sur by distributing gasoline, religious items and gift certificates on Saturday.

Jiménez has been going around the country but is more on his political plans for 2007. His name was being mentioned as a candidate for mayor of Manila.

Instead, he urged hundreds of people that showed up at the local park here to be faithful to God and shy away from evil.

"Salo ne po ang mga taong nagdaan (Especially students)," he said.

He then told the crowd that there are people in Congress who were there genuinely serving the country to suffer.

"Ang si Davao Rep. Douglas Cagas ang isa sa mga pinagpala sa akin at lingcong hindi dahil sa shot's negotiation, kundi dahil lang sa ako ay nasa Malacañang na ako at siyam na magkaibigan sa mga na Congress ang isa sa mga nagsabi na ako ay traydor (Douglas Cagas is one of those who stood for my innocent in Congress, one because I was corrupt but because I allegedly lied in Malacañang and should therefore not serve the people)," Jiménez said.

Jiménez has bragged about his accomplishments in the Manila district he previously served.

Asked what he was planning to do in 2007, Jiménez just smiled and said he wants to support politicians who would destroy and help alleviate poverty in the country. Eddie U. Aguilera, PDI Mindanao Bureau

STL worse, says bishop

BAGUIO CITY—INSTEAD of eradicating jueteng, the government supported Small Town Lottery will worsen the illegal gambling situation in the country, according to Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz.

"Instead of linking the country's illegal numbers game, STL, notoriously promotes jueteng," Cruz, outstanding president of the Komisiya ng Bayan Laban sa Sugal, said in a statement on Monday.

"STL is but a jueteng clone, with the added (with that) STL cannot survive by its own resources without the support of jueteng operators," he said.

Cruz said it used to be that only jueteng was "sucking the money of the poor" nearly, especially in Luzon.

"Now the same regime (Region, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog and Bicol) no now even propagandizing being initiated by STL," he said.

He said gambling lords used to determine the amount of payola and the people who would receive it. He said there is now a so-called "entrepreneur of value for distributed as a "very powerful and influential resident or official" that decides "how much payola the jueteng lords have to give, to whom and when."

Cruz did not identify the members of this group, but said they were negotiating for a 7-percent take from the gross collection of jueteng nationwide.

"But the jueteng lords balked, so the stud was reducing it to 3 percent. The negotiations is still ongoing and the payola could go down to 1 percent," he said.

"That percentage is big, considering that from Pangasinan alone, the daily jueteng take could be as much as 90 million," he said.

He said money is "needed for the coming elections and the biggest source of money is jueteng."

He said STL by itself was not acceptable to operators because a big percentage would be cut from the bet collection.

Yolanda Sotelo-Pantino, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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E-mail to: provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Old houses mirror revolutionary past

By Lara Quintano
San Miguel, Bulacan

THE VILLAGES OF SAN JOSE AND San Vicente in San Miguel, Bulacan, hold the mirror to the town's colorful past. Spread in these communities are old houses, *bahay na bato* (stone houses), that are mute witnesses to events that had shaped the country's history.

Unlike the old mansions in the City of Vigan in Ilocos Sur, that are mostly preserved along the cobblestone stretch of Crisologo Street, San Miguel's old houses are found on every street.

Local historian Francisco Buencamino, 87, and his wife Carmen, the tourism board president and coordinator of the San Miguel de Mayumo Foundation, said the San Miguel houses were unique, having been used as residential and vacation homes or meeting places of Filipino revolutionaries.

San Miguel's old houses are unique, having been used as shelters, residences, vacation houses or meeting places of leaders of the revolution

Old, new occupants

The house once owned by Dr. Maximo Viola, a close friend of Dr. Jose Rizal and the one who lent money to the national hero to pay for the publication of the novel "Noli Me Tangere," is now owned by Amelia Reyes.

Regor Pablo, one of the occupants, said the family bought the house, built in 1906, through bank bidding.

The 4,000-square-meter lot's original tiled tile Lipahong mid-floor remains while the house's walls, floors and ceilings, which are made of nipa and molasses, are repainted from time to time.

Rodrigo Florencio, municipal tourism officer, said a house that used to stand on the vacant lot across the Viola house was a meeting place of Rizal sympathizers.

Florencio said the house, called here as the "Unreal house," collapsed a few years ago and was demolished. Only the brick gate of the compound remains.

Another old house, the only three-story structure in town, is referred to by residents as the "mahiwagang bahay (big house)."

Owned by former Mayor Catalino Avella and his wife Valeriana de Leon, the house had been the scene of gatherings of the Katipunan in the early 1900s.

Mariano de Leon Sevilla, a son of Catalino and delegate to the 1934 Constitutional Convention, had also lived there.

Originally built by Dr. Leon's parents, Braulio de Leon and Hadia Santiago, the house displays a glass art containing land believed to have been collected from the spot where Rizal fell when he was executed in Bagumbayan (now Luneta Park) on Dec. 30, 1896.

The house of Damaso Sempio and his wife, Crispina de Leon, a member of the feuded De Leons clan in the town, was a refuge of another revolutionary hero.

Sen. Gregorio del Pilar, Sempio's uncle, had spent the night in this house on his way to Bulacan to cover the retreat of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, according to Buencamino.

Another prominent guest was Antonio Bacarro, the Filipino general who refused to recognize American sovereignty over the Philippines.

According to the town's website, former Mayor Manuel de Leon Lipana, who now owns the house, commissioned his cousin, Fernando Sempio, to handle the restoration work in 1982.

Aguinaldo used the house of Elaine Tecson on 120 Mead Street as headquarters before the signing of the Pact of Biak-na-Bato, which called for the laying down of arms by revolutionary forces led by the general.

Buencamino said one of Tecson's descendants had been claiming that the actual signing was done in their house and not in one of the rooms in the town's ayuntamiento.

The town's website said Josefina Tecson-Mendiola, the current owner of the house, preserved the furniture and other antique items, including two ornately carved narra sofas, lounging chairs, rocking chairs, and a grandfather's clock adorning the living room.

The house of Jose de Leon, a grandnephew of the town, and his second wife, Narcisa "Doña Ahang" Buencamino, the founder of 1896 Parques and known as the "Mother of the Filipino Movie Industry," has withstood the ele-

THE ONLY three-story structure in San Miguel, Bulacan, the "mahiwang bahay" (big house) or Sevilla Mansion had been the venue of gatherings of the local elite in the early 1900s.

ments and is among the best-kept antebellum.

Also preserved is the house of Jose Miguel Shipe that was built from 1903 to 1907. Residents nominate the house with Sen. Alfredo Lim because his grandfather, Bernardo Shipe, is a brother of Don Miguel.

Other significant homes are those of Isidro Tecson, a leader of Filipino revolutionary forces; Valerio Mayo, founder of Liga Filipina during the revolution; George Santos Viola, descendant of Lt. Maximo Viola, the Bernardo Viola family, and Celle Santos, a former Bulacan governor.

Treasure hunting

The Buencamino couple said some of the old houses in the town had been destroyed because of treasure hunting.

Buencamino said there was nothing they could do when a house owner decided to destroy their property. "The old houses are privately owned. The only way we can intervene is to help them in promotion purposes," he said.

He said some owners and their caretakers would not allow tourists to enter the premises unless they (Buencamino and his wife) escort them. He said some caretakers of these old houses collect fees from visitors.

Jun Miguel's real treasure lies in its old houses that are replete with history. The houses can give residents a good source of income if they will only recognize its charm.

In his blog site (landmarkers.blogspot.com), Jun Buencamino, a member of the board of trustees of the Heritage Conservation Society, said San Miguel was one of the few well-preserved towns that have yet to be declared by the National Historical Institute as a heritage town.

"While these historians sit down and take their time, many centuries-old homes are going down, taken for granted by the very institutions mandated to protect them," Buencamino said.

"How sad it was to see a well-preserved heritage town in such a sorry state. I wonder why the provincial government of Bulacan, which I have known to be a staunch advocate of culture and the arts, is allowing these houses to decay and remain to such a state of neglect given that San Miguel's ancestral homes are among the showcases of the province," he said.

Gov. Emilio Aguinaldo used this house of Tecson Tecson on J.P. Rizal Street as headquarters before the Biak-na-Bato pact signed.

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Villagers block plan to dump smuggled meat

CITY OF SAN PEDRO—Officials, acting on a complaint of residents, stopped a plan to dump P22 million worth of smuggled meat and meatloaf in Sta. Rita and Gregorio towns in Pangasinan.

The items were seized by the customs bureau at the South Harbor in Manila.

Dr. Romeo Mercado, officer in charge of the Department of Agriculture's regulatory division in Central Luzon, said the contractor—Blas Brothers Trading and Garbage Collection Co.—escorted four 40-foot container vans carrying pork, chicken and meatloaf to Manila Saturday.

The smuggled items' consignee was Asia Golden Marketing.

The contractor initially planned to dump the items on a lot in Sta. Rita town, but residents found out about it. The contractor tried but failed to find another site in Gregorio town.

Officials said dumping the items in their towns would endanger public health.

Police were told to block the entry of the items in the two towns. Rosario Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon

98 VICTIMS FILE CHARGES

Teacher-turned-recruiter held

LUCENA CITY—AT LEAST 98 VICTIMS OF a fake overseas job placement racket have already filed complaints against a former teacher who turned to illegal recruitment and was arrested on Friday, the chief of the Lucena City Police Office said Monday.

"We expect more victims to appear as the number is also the their respective complaints," Senior Supt. Reuben Theodore Sindac said.

On Friday, police arrested Juliana Victoria de los Angeles with aliases "Mai-la Juliet-Victoria Sarabi" and "Irene," 38, in her residence in the nearby town of Tayabas.

Police said since February, the suspect had been recruiting workers for nonexistent jobs in South Korea inside a popular restaurant here.

She was also often seen inside the Expo Promotion Agency in this city, which she pretended is her prospective victims as her office, recruiting to investigators.

Police said the suspect was able to convince Commissioner Rubi Inquiller of Expo to allow her to use his office to become her center of operations.

> Investigators say suspect was able to collect at least P1 million from jobseekers

The suspect also managed to convince her victims to have their physical examination at Saint Thomas Diagnostic Center in Malate.

The victims also underwent Korean language training on several occasions, also upon the instruction of the suspect.

The racket was exposed to the police after Inquiller found that the suspect had no legal authority to recruit migrant workers.

He also discovered that the e-mailed correspondences and job orders to the suspect that supposedly came from foreign principals were all manufactured, including all the fake documents from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

Most of the victims were from this city and nearby municipalities.

Investigators said De los Angeles was able to collect at least P1 million from her victims.

De los Angeles resisted arrest.

She now faces charges of direct search, estafa and violation of RA 8042 for illegal recruitment.

She is now detained at the local jail here. Evelyn F. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luxon

Gov't to buy ₱1B worth of cheap drugs from India

By Jaime Laude
First Posted 01:28:00 11/15/2006

Filed under: Drugs and Medicines, Health Care, Government Agencies, Pharmaceutical Industry

MANILA, Philippines—The government will buy ₱1 billion worth of cheap drugs from India, which will be sold in Mahaveer City to urge Filipinos to stop relying on patent and name-brand medicines.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said the Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC) would import the drugs from India's Mahaveer Group of Companies.

Duque said the drugs would be sold in Mahaveer City, a 1,000-square-meter area in Quezon City, which would be patterned after Chinatown in Binondo, Manila.

Duque said the drugs would be sold at prices 50 percent lower than those of patented medicines.

He said the drugs would be sold in Mahaveer

INSPECTION (At left) Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia, Ambassador Mariano Apacible (left) and Architect Manuel Guanzon check out what still needs to be done on Monday. Workers rush to put the finishing touches (above) to the ceiling of the lobby of CICC, which was built at the cost of P450M.

Asean meet moves venue to Mactan

Front page 4 ▸

BUSH JOB. Soldiers are enlisted to paint the pre-fab interior wall of the Cebu International Convention Center (CICC) in Mandaue, which was constructed specially to be the venue for the 12th Asean Summit of Leaders to be held Dec. 11 to 14.

▸ More photos, page A-2

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P3.3B investments lost in land buying spree

From page A1

insurance, reinsurance, pre-need and microenterprise.

Ibay source said "short-term loans to fund long-term investments such as real estate development" dealt the final blow to the BBC.

The Ibarra-May Alidon committee report said BBC shortterm loans in 1996 amounted to P2.6 billion, this rose to P4.2 billion in 1998. During the same period, BBC real estate investments alone doubled from P1.6 billion to P6.2 billion.

Giving BBC audited financial statements, the Feliciano commission, which looked into the grievances used by rebel soldiers involved in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, said the BBC paid P427 million in interest in 1997, P562 million in 1998 and P684 million in 1999.

The commission also reported that the members' total contributions in 1996 stood at P482 million. P463 million in 1999 and P469 million in 2000.

The Senate report said that the BBC was "in light cash position" as early as December 1996. In 1997, the Asian financial crisis hit the country, pulling the peso down by as much as 40 percent against the US dollar. Real estate was among those hardest hit.

Real estate buying spree

Instead of hedging its assets against the financial crisis, the report showed that the BBC went on a real estate buying spree.

In fact, the first official complaint filed against the BBC in December 1997 involved the purchase of 27 lots on General Luna in Cebu.

The complainant, then South Common Rep. Jesnilbert D. Antonino, alleged that the BBC misdeclared the cost per square meter at P5,000 to avoid payment of capital gains and documentary stamp taxes.

The blue ribbon committee investigation would uncover a scam that involved the BBC, several lawyers and residents in General Luna on Cebu. The BBC prepared a deed of sale to indicate the selling price at P5,000 per square meter for tax purposes and a separate deed of sale to justify the release of BBC funds.

Land acquisition overprice

The same procedure was also used in BBC purchases of land in Iloilo City, Laguna and Mindoro.

The Senate report estimated the total overprice for land acquisitions in Southern Iloilo City, Iloilo City, Laguna and Batangas at P702 million. The committee believed it would be higher, considering that the BBC also bought parcels of land in Pangasinan and Bataan.

The investment performed by the liquidated bank's series of interim investments since the early 1990s. An example was Mercantile, one of the BBC's first ventures.

An independent audit report said that Mercantile existed in name only because it incurred losing losses in 1992. Despite this, the BBC continued to infuse capital into the ailing firm that by 1995, the losses totaled P136 million. It was also saddled with a labor problem. Back wages alone totaled P7.6 million.

Mercantile was dissolved on June 6, 1999, nearly two decades after the BBC set it up with a capital of P127 million.

Bulacan Link Inc., another BBC subsidiary owned by controlling stockholder Jose Ma. Ty, was set up after the BBC set up the gasoline factory with a capital of P20 million. The Senate blue ribbon committee report said Bulacan Link also received generous loans from the BBC to sustain its operations even while it was clearly losing money.

Stockbrokerage firm

Public Securities Corp. (PSC), a stockbrokerage firm, received a P76-million loan from the BBC in 1994. Two years later, the SEC-BI-formed Resources and Investment Corporate Review Inc., in scoring P254 million in the firm's books would be found in the Securities and Exchange Commission as the "covered company" of PSC. The financial statement of PSC in 2001 showed a P1.1-and-financial loss.

A land developer from Davao Pak Managers, which manages the country's largest theme park, Enchanted Kingdom, one of Asia's largest theme parks, named the BBC as a stockholder with two military officers among its board of directors. The BBC has reportedly invested P127 million in Amistar Holdings Inc. in 2004.

In 2004, Amistar was reported negotiating with its creditor banks to restructure its debts totaling P1 billion.

Consortrading firm

GMR Inc., a retired trading company reported by the Senate blue ribbon as among the favored affiliates of the BBC, was also dissolved in April 2000 due to "financial constraints." Its financial statement for 1998 mentioned "revenues ... representing the cost of rentals" to Rancho Golf Club and Estates and the Riviera Golf and Country Club worth P16.8 million.

Inglewood Profit Corp., an importer of resin products, got a P86-million loan from the BBC. Renamed Clear Water Tuna Corp. with a paid-up capital of P200 million, it is listed in the BBC as a subsidiary of Pest Detectors Prime Holdings Inc. Most of the papers at the BBC to declare the BBC as among its stockholders.

Philippine Seaman Trade Center Inc. has also listed the BBC among its stockholders with P15 million worth of shares. Other BBC records said the BBC invested P56 million in the modern health facility in the Cardinal Santos Medical Center.

AFP sacks 'sabungero' ...

From page A1

in Shoemart, Subdivision in Batchoque City allegedly owned by three former Inspector Angeles Reyes' town government secretary).

A Memorandum addressed told the memorial that Tabas received the subdivision office to tender upon that she could transfer covered by the mortgage parcel.

The day after the story came out in the Inquirer, the official was of Tabas came to the office claiming it was a ploy to extend the limit, not Reyes.

Gail Tabas, then 23, said he came forward "to avoid any misunderstanding that the cash loan on Dasing Boning Street in Sto. Rosa, Pantabangan, was owned by Reyes."

Tabas explained that he wanted the cash for in it "for Reyes' to come for" in 1997 while he was still a high school student at Bro. Bosco in Makati.

"I wanted that cash only P150,000 from my savings. It's business, not gambling," the young Tabas told the lawmen.

"I am sorry that my hobby for put my father and Secretary Reyes in a bad light," the young Tabas said.

Legcor chief

A member of Philippine Military Academy Class 1979, the elder Tabas served under Reyes in 1991, when Reyes was the commanding general of the 5th Division. Reyes, who became AFP chief of staff in 1999, appointed Tabas chief of the Intelligence Command.

Tabas was removed from Legcor committee in 2001, reported by now a Congressman with Gen. Hernando Iluminado, who had replaced Reyes as AFP chief of staff.

Prior to his assignment as brigade commander, he headed the anti-crime Task Force Tagis of the Army's 6th Infantry Division in Maguindanao.

Possible court-martial

Tabas is under investigation by the Army Inspector Generals office for possible court-martial or summary dismissal for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

"I relieved him from his post a long time ago. He is under investigation," Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino said when asked to comment yesterday. He did not elaborate.

Maj. Ernesto Torres Jr., Army spokesperson, also did not say why Tabas was relieved. "There's a regular performance audit and he failed," he said.

Photographed

Army sources said Tabas was relieved two weeks ago after he was photographed playing hero inside a cockpit in Tacurong City.

"Grandstanding is a no-no in the Army officers, more so for a brigade commander," said an Army officer who asked not to be named.

"He was caught strapping in a cockfighting in his area of responsibility. That is gambling and that is against our rules," another Army officer said.

No assignment

Tabas reportedly returned to Army headquarters at Fort Bonifacio but he was not detained or restricted to quarters.

"He was just relieved and given no assignment pending the probe," said an Army officer who added that Tabas' upcoming promotion to brigadier general could be affected by the investigation.

Tabas has reportedly been replaced by Col. Basilio Garcia.

With a report from Jerome Aning

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Comedian Dolphy's grandson arrested

19-year-old slay suspect nabbed in rehab center

By Alcuin Papa and Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE GRANDSON OF COMEDY KING DOLPHY, a suspect in the murder of an upholstery worker last year, has been arrested in Tagaig City and was presented to media yesterday.

Nicolo Paulo Quinon, 19, was arrested at the Center for the Ultimate Rehabilitation of Drug Dependents in Bicutan after a Quezon City court issued a warrant for his arrest.

Supt. Romeo Hal of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group said Quinon had been accused of killing Joel Tolabot, 19, on Dec. 19, 2005.

Tolabot was waiting for a ride home at the corner of Roxanne and Reserve Streets in Quezon City when he was killed. He police official said.

Hal said the motive for Tolabot's killing has yet to be determined. But Pegasa and Inquirer, parents of the victim, told reporters that their son was a victim of a "thrill killing."

"It seemed as if he was killed just for fun. It has to because he was just trying to earn an honest living. We believe that the suspect really killed our son," a teary-eyed Angelita said.

The suspect was brought to the Quezon City Regional Trial Court for inquest after being presented to media.

Nicolo is the son of Wilfredo "Freddie" Quinon, Dolphy's son who passed away last year due to respiratory complications after he fell inside his home, said Nene Biago, the comedian's longtime publicist and friend.

"Freddie is the (comedian's) son with Estrella," Biago added. "Nicolo is Freddie's son by Nelda, who's from Iloilo."

She recalled that Nicolo used to appear in movies when he was a child "like Wowowee, Dolphy's son, Germon Alma Moreno is his mother's."

Biago expressed surprise over the fact that Nicolo was arrested only recently when the alleged murder "took place almost a year ago."

NICOLO Paulo Quinon wipes his face with a handkerchief as he was presented to media yesterday. He was ordered arrested for a Quezon City court for the alleged murder of an upholstery worker last year. GARY LLORIN

Losing Your Hair Can Make You Ten Years Older

Nothing tears down a man's confidence more than being mistakenly thought of as the bald father of his wife, or worst, the husband of his mom. The depression you get over your hair can add up to make you feel years older. Svenson's Cosmetic Transdermal Reconstruction means real hair. Quickly and effectively it restores your full head of hair and becomes a natural part of you. You can swim with it, play golf and do other activities with total confidence.

To end your hairloss worries, call Svenson now for a free consultation.

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Lots and lots of pizza bring much success to Ed and Tess Ngan Tian. A lot of help was given to them by BPI Family Savings Bank.

Twenty years ago, Tess Ngan Tian and her husband Ed stood on a vacant lot in Marikina, Manila. The couple did not have the slightest idea that it was the start of something big for them. That vacant lot actually became the birthplace of a successful family business.

The couple constructed a commercial building on that lot and rented out stalls to businessmen. Tess opted to turn the vacant stalls to a small snack bar that sold siopao, sandwiches and other quick-serve merienda to students. *"It was when I decided to concentrate on one product – pizza! I knew it was a big step to take. But my husband convinced me to take the risk"*, said Tess. And so, she started her venture into the pizza business by enrolling in a pizza technology course at the American Institute of Baking in the US.

"Armed with the knowledge to help me formulate a pizza that would satisfy the Filipino palate, I started my pizza business and named it Lots 'A Pizza", Tess recalled. In 1996, the first Lots 'A Pizza store was opened in Vista Mall. With a lot of perseverance and hard work, Tess was able to grow the business. Now, it has more than 75 stores all over Luzon.

"Our business would not have grown without the support of our partners, and of BPI Family Savings Bank", said Tess. BPI Family Savings Bank granted them a loan, which they used in their business and helped in the construction of the 3-storey Lots 'A Pizza headquarters in Las Piñas.

"We will continue to expand in Visayas and Mindanao, and we will own a more sok the support of BPI Family Savings Bank", an obviously happy and proud Tess Ngan Tian said while she helped in serving the customers in their store.

LOTS 'A PIZZA

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Provincial Business Centers:

5 suspects in cameraman's slay face murder raps

By Nancy C. Carvajal

FOLLOWING THE SPREE OF ATTACKS against the family and friends of a star witness in the robbery and slay of TV5's cameraman Rudyh Nuñez, the police yesterday filed murder charges against five men in the Caloocan City prosecutor's office.

Charged were PO1 Michael Beatrix, Annie Javier, Rannie de la Cruz, Alberto Mallorca and Gene Magnayon.

"They were positively identified by several witnesses and were heard uttering words that would implicate them in the crimes," said Chief Insp. Crescencio Galvez, the city's chief intelligence officer.

None of the suspects, however, have been arrested.

Galvez added that the relative of Celerino Salarda, father of witness Charlie Salarda, had identified Javier as the one who had threatened her husband two days before he was killed.

Twice supposedly told the victim to order his son to stop talking otherwise, they would all be killed," the police official said.

Charlie Salarda is one of the witnesses in the Nuñez case. He had earlier linked two policemen—Insp. Bryan Limbo and PO1 Antonio de Guzman—to the robbery-slay.

Galvez added that several witnesses had already identified the three men shot dead as he was riding his motorcycle on Nov. 6.

Some of the suspects were also spotted walking away from the house in Caloocan City where Celerino's wake was held last Friday night. Several men had hurled grenades at people attending the wake, leaving two people dead and nearly two dozen others wounded.

Charlie was supposed to go to his father's wake that night but the police asked him not to proceed after receiving a tip that some men were out to kill him.

According to Galvez, the suspects were members of a syndicate that operated in Caloocan and nearby areas. The gang's leader alleged to be Ismael Magnayon, was the one who shot dead Butler in July, according to Charlie. Magnayon, however, was accidentally killed by a jail guard inside the Caloocan City Jail Annex's cell under questionable circumstances.

JUST A DRILL
Members of the Makati police show off their fighting form during an exercise yesterday in which they responded to a mock hostage situation. EDCADIZ

Failed heist leads police to link try to other rob case

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE PARAÑAQUE CITY POLICE YESTERDAY said the group that attempted to rob a busy Four Philippines shop before dawn on Monday was probably the same one that broke into a gem store in Cavite province last week.

"Similarly, the group arrived and dressed in policemen attire they pulled off the heist," said city police chief Supt. Renard Ticzon.

Ten unidentified armed men dressed in police uniforms took all the guns and ammunition inside the Gate Arms Gunshop located at the PNR shell before dawn on Nov. 6. They also took with them an undetermined amount of cash.

Ticzon said the suspects could be the same men, all armed with M-16 rifles, who barged into the DPP shop on Sitmo Aguilar Avenue, Barangay Sto. Niño at around 12:40 a.m. the other day.

Senior Insp. Darey Dimson, head of the Sto. Niño Community Precinct 3, said in his report that the suspects first disarmed security guards Leomer Arcenal and Jeoffrey Divina, who were manning the main gate, and tied them up using packing tape.

The suspects then proceeded to the building where the cash and treasury booth were located. They also disarmed two other guards —Rodilo Amocoldad and Edgardo Tinoco— and their supervisor, Cristian Andaya Jr.

The suspects, however, failed to open the vault. They escaped on board two vehicles, a Toyota Corolla and Toyota Hi Lux van with plate number RCI 866. Dimson said in his report.

"It seems that the group was outnumbered. They were not able to open the vault because it was well-secured. They did not have enough tools to destroy it," said Ticzon.

Jeep drivers up in arms vs traffic scheme

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

SAYING THE CITY GOVERNMENT SNUBBED other groups of jeepney drivers in Mandaluyong City, almost a hundred drivers affected by a month-old experiment traffic scheme trooped to City Hall yesterday to air their protest.

Members of the Philippine Confederation of Drivers Organizations-Alliance of Concerned Transport Operators, led by their chair Efren de Luna, were protesting the loading and unloading scheme which took effect last month on Shaw Boulevard. It bars jeepney drivers plying the Pasig-Quiapo route from picking up passengers between San Miguel and Dr. Francisco Avenues.

According to Traffic Management head Marcelo Malabaro, the new scheme has eased traffic on the usually busy intersection. But as a concession to the group, he agreed to implement a moratorium until Dec. 31 on the new loading and unloading scheme.

De Luna said the scheme resulted in a decline in their earnings.

"Passengers from Pasig City going to Cubao and Ilalo are no longer riding our jeeps and have been getting on Pasig-Cubao and Pasig-United jeeps, whose terminals are nearer to Ilalo," he explained.

Pasay City's acting mayor hits back; plans charges vs accusers

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ACTING PASAY MAYOR ALLAN PANALIGAN is vowing to fight back.

Panaligan, an interim over the weekend, said he and his lawyers were already studying the charges they would file against former City Hall employees who recently lodged administrative and criminal cases against him.

Panaligan, three employees...among the 198 city government workers whose services were terminated on Oct. 27 ...filed separate administrative and criminal cases against Panaligan at the Ombudsman.

They accused him of grave abuse of authority and violating Republic Act 3019 or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act. Other dismissed employees have said that they would also sue the acting mayor.

Two weeks ago, four traffic enforcers also filed a case against Panaligan at the Ombudsman after he allegedly ordered their arrest after they apprehended a bus driver for a traffic violation.

"We cannot stop them from filing charges against me. We have anticipated this and I think there's more to come. They will throw everything against us, even their kitchen sink, if they could," the acting mayor told the Inquirer.

Panaligan, however, stressed that the charges against him were baseless. As acting mayor, he said he has the authority to relieve workers at City Hall. "We, I have the full power to do that," Panaligan stressed, adding that he dismissed the 198 employees because their services were no longer needed.

What did Eggie tell Letty that made her laugh?

TIME MAGAZINE recently honored Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc (left), Inquirer's editor-in-chief, and Eugenia "Eggie" Apostol (right), founding chairperson, as two of Asia's heroes over the last 60 years. The magazine cited Apostol and Magsanoc for standing up against a dictatorship and launching the Inquirer with its unflinching brand of journalism.

Answer the question above and get a chance to win P400,000 in cash and appliances.

Here's how to join:

1. Suggest an answer to the question "What did Eggie tell Letty that made her laugh?" in 25 words or less. The best one-liner will win the grand prize.
2. Send your entry with your name, age, address and telephone number to the following:
   - Email:
   - Postal: Inquirer Mail Processing Division, PO Box ..., Cubao Postal or similar Inquirer mail address
   - Fax:
3. Entries must be received by the Philippine Daily Inquirer on or before December 31, 2006.
4. Winners will be chosen by a panel of Inquirer editors, publishers or the Inquirer's Ombudsman. Decisions are final.
5. Winners must present a valid ID to claim their prizes, tickets, passport/visa and any certification that may be required.
6. Prizes can be claimed at the Philippine Daily Inquirer Head Office. Prizes of P4,000 and above are subject to withholding tax.
7. Taxes will be paid by the Philippine Daily Inquirer.
8. Prizes not claimed within 30 days from date of notification will be forfeited in favor of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.
9. Winners shall agree to have their names and photos published in the newspaper or broadcasted on any media in behalf of advertisements for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, may deem appropriate.
10. In case of dispute, the Philippine Daily Inquirer's decision shall be final.
11. All employees of PDI, their relatives up to 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity, and of its advertising agency, are not allowed to participate in this promo.

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Answer charges, suspect in wife's murder told

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE HUSBAND OF GLADYS Media Gloray Cruz, president Bella Residence, must face a Makati prosecutor in two weeks to answer parricide charges pressed against him by complainant with the death last Sept. 6.

The Makati City Prosecutor's Office has set the preliminary hearings for the case on Nov. 28 and Dec. 5, investigating prosecutor Henry Istarul told the Inquirer yesterday.

Istarul said he would send a subpoena to Bueno Gutierrez, the victim's husband and prime suspect in the brutal slay, ordering him to show up at the prosecutor's office on the said dates.

"By procedure, he [respondent husband] has to personally appear because he has to subscribe to his counter-affidavit," he added. Istarul, who received the records of the case on Monday afternoon, said he will also ask "all police officers responsible for the investigation" to appear in his office on the same dates.

On Nov. 8, the Criminal Investigation Section of the Makati police filed parricide charges against Bueno in the city prosecutor's office for his "possible initials" in his wife's death, based on the statement he gave to police. Bueno—editor in chief of Media Glossy, a lifestyle publication on Interactive Technology magazines—said he found his wife's body inside the toilet of her office on the third floor of Pacombia II Building in Legaspi Village, Makati. Bella's cheek had been slashed when he took her body from the crib scene. Police said they considered Bueno a suspect after he said his wife had committed suicide, contrary to the autopsy report saying the victim could not have slashed her cheek herself and stabbed herself several times.

TIME TO RELAX
A family enjoys a relaxing boat ride at the La Mesa Dam ecopark in Quezon City. JOAN LANDICHO

METROBRIEFS

No-shows

CAMBA, Kapitan Boco Juliet Hidalgo showed up at the regular council session on Monday afternoon, ready to talk about the possibility of membership in mediation-allowing the operation of a gaming center in the town's port. But as councilors...at blackout with Comelec Mayor Mike Ragas. Asked to show up, Hidalgo told the councilors he wished that only he and four opposition councilors turned up during the regular session. Most of the councilors who were absent, however, said they couldn't attend the session because they were sick.

Edson C. Cabalza Jr.

Dance drama tilt

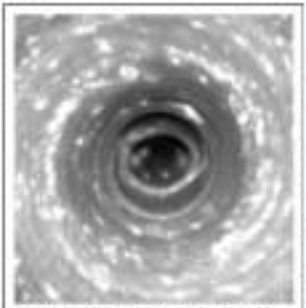
THE THIRD series of the "Gilas ang Dance Drama Festival Competition in the Culture of Peace in Philippine Myths and Legends" will be held at 1 p.m. on Nov. 19 at the Folk Arts Theater, CCP Complex in Pasay City. The contest is intended extending the richness of the country's heritage. The first prize winner will receive P150,000, second prize winners P75,000 and third prize, P50,000. Among those expected to attend the event are members of the diplomatic corps, government officials and employees, historians, artists, teachers and students of schools in Metro Manila.

Letran grand reunion

LETRANITES '71-'81 look dun, your's 25th Letran Grand Alumni Homecoming with the "Night of Knights" to be held on Nov. 10, 6 p.m. at the Fiesta de Manila at Roxas Boulevard. Fiesta de Manila is located between Diamond Hotel and Admiral, just across Baywalk. The alumni association committee also will unveil new Toyota Vios during the occasion. For inquiries, please call event organizer, Rowena Ian... at 4377000 or the Letranside 77-81 secretariat at 7347706.

UP Law homecoming

CLASS 1981 of the University of the Philippines College of Law, which is marking its 40 run jubilee this year, will host the 2006 grand alumni homecoming at the Manila Marriott Hotel in Pasay City. The theme "Let the Medicine word Survive!" (Hindi lay will start at 5 p.m. with an exhibit commemorating the college's 80th anniversary. Dance of honor will be held. Now the Manila Clarion Upper Campus, Manila Escalante and the Diliman Theater Band will provide musical numbers. For details, call Tess Villa-Ignacio at 9189606 to 08.



SATURN PHENOMENON. This photo made by the Cassini spacecraft and released by Nasa shows the swirling hurricane-like storms at Saturn's south pole, where the vertical structure of the clouds is highlighted by shadows. Such a storm, with a well-developed eye ringed by towering clouds, is a phenomenon never before seen on another planet. –AP

South Ossetia votes to break away from Georgia's rule

TSKHINVALI—ALMOST 100 PERCENT of voters in Georgia's small separatist territory of South Ossetia have opted for independence, according to partial results released Monday, underlining a diplomatic rift between Russia and the West over the region's future.

Results received from 70 percent of polling stations following the Sunday referendum showed that 99.6 to 99 percent of voters had cast their ballots in favor of independence, election officials told AFP. No independent confirmation was available.

As local residents celebrated what the rebel authorities were portraying as a result, with cars honking horns and flying South Ossetian flags, political leaders in Tbilisi denounced the ballot as irrelevant and the European Union reiterated its promise to petition of the vote.

Russia, which backs the rebel authorities and built explosively swallowing half-dozen independent, welcomed the referendum as a "free democratic process" in a foreign ministry statement released Monday.

"However Georgia or several Western powers try to disparage the importance of this event, it has a symbolic character all the same," the statement said.

In Georgia, the vote was angrily dismissed.

"Everybody needs to understand, once and for all, that no amount of referendums or elections will move Georgia or give up that which belongs to the Georgian people by God's will," Georgi Targamadzeli, head of the Georgian parliament's reconciliation bloc said in televised remarks.

On a visit to Moldova, Georgian Foreign Minister Grigi Bezhuashvili said the country would resolve its territorial problems peacefully and added that Tbilisi had "done everything possible to prevent the referendum provoking any kind of deterioration in the region." The Finnish EU presidency released a statement saying the vote "contradicts Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity which is internationally recognized borders." "The referendum in South Ossetia did not allow the free expression of the popular will," the statement said.

The leadership of the tiny region in the foothills of the Caucasus mountains maintains, however, that the referendum is a first step toward international acceptance and eventual union with Russia.

"Separation with Russia is a priority of South Ossetian policy." The region's de facto leader Eduard Kokoity said on Monday, according to Interfax, after preliminary ballot counts showed he won a landslide re-presidential elections held in parallel to the independence poll.

Polling data could not be independently confirmed. To test unclear how many, if any, ethnic Georgians living in South Ossetia took part in the vote in this province of some 73,000 people, according to fourth-election statistics.

The only Georgian organizations allowed to monitor the poll said the vote was marred by fraudulent.

"We believe that a mass stuffing of ballots took place," Atlantic Integration, who headed a team of three observers from the Tbilisi-based Georgia minority rights lobby group, told AFP.

Russian observers, including parliament members who arrived via known for the run-off's final poll, gave it their seal of approval. AFP

SOUTH OSSETIA

Georgia's breakaway South Ossetia voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence in a referendum tempered by signs that Tbilisi wanted to ease tensions with the separatists and their Russian backers

Chad's gov't declares state of emergency

N'JAMENA, CHAD: CHAD'S government on Monday declared a state of emergency, arresting much of the country after recent clashes between Arab and non-Arab communities killed hundreds of people in the east.

"Given the seriousness of the situation and the acute chaos further are taking, the government has adopted a state of emergency to three regions (Ouaddai, Wadi Fira and Guéménné) currently affected" by the fighting, the government said in a statement.

In a precaution, the state of emergency—which also includes the media—will extend to some other parts of the north central Africa nation, including the capital and the mountainous Batha, Ennedi and Tibesti region bordering on Libya.

The government declaration comes after violence erupted in eastern Chad this month as Arab horsemen raided and torched villages whose inhabitants are mostly of black African descent, killing roughly 300 people.

The clashes followed separate fighting in the same region pitting government troops against a newly merged alliance of rebels that briefly seized two towns in October.

"This state of emergency aims to quell serious threats to public order leading to insecurity that is rife in these regions," said the statement read out on state television.

Official sources said the Western-backed government of Prime Minister Pascal Yoadimnadji would now send the draft back to New York and wait for the final text on the current count to return.

"Here we are today on the road to revealing the truth and achieving justice through the most truth-seeking international channels that will be limited to expulse some of our most and criminal acts," Siniora told reporters after the meeting.

The resignations by ten Hezbollah ministers and their allies brought in a head a crisis in Lebanon which has grown steadily worse since Hariri's killing last year and escalated further after Israel's war on Lebanon.

Hezbollah, the most powerful group in Lebanon, and its allies see the tribunal as a tool to punish Syria, blamed by many Lebanese for Hariri's killing in a suicide truck bombing last year. Damascus denies involvement.

A UN commission investigating the assassination has implicated senior Lebanese and Syrian security officials.

Lebanon crisis deepens, Cabinet backs Hariri court

BEIRUT—LEBANON'S POLITICAL crisis deepened on Monday as a cabinet Cabinet approved draft UN agreement for a tribunal to try the killers of ex-premier Rafik al-Hariri despite the resignation of six pro-Syrian ministers.

Official sources said the Western-backed government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora would now send the draft back to New York and wait for the final text on the current count to return.

"Here we are today on the road to revealing the truth and achieving justice through the most truth-seeking international channels that will be limited to expulse some of our most and criminal acts," Siniora told reporters after the meeting.

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A UN commission investigating the assassination has implicated senior Lebanese and Syrian security officials.

At the United Nations in New York, UN ambassador John Bolton said his country was prepared to move quickly on the tribunal concept or approve the UN-Israel "once we receive formal word from the government of Lebanon." The approval of the draft follows deadlocked talks over Hezbollah's demands for greater say in government and political tensions which threatens to spill into street confrontations. Reuters

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Bush rejects timetable on US troop withdrawal

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT George W. Bush traded ideas on Iraq with a bipartisan commission and promised to work with the Democratic majority Congress after he voted to "continue down the road."

At the same time, he renewed his opposition to any timetable for withdrawing US troops.

As Bush met with the Iraq Study Group co-chairmen, he hosted in the Oval Office the Senate armed Services Committee: Carl Levin of Michigan, said the administration did not see that "we're getting deeper and deeper into choke."

Levin and other Democrats pressed Bush to change course. Some right now, suggesting that would pressure the Iraqi government into overseeing more responsibility.

Bush in turn had more trouble for the Democrats, less than a week after they won control of both chambers of Congress in midterm elections in which the

BUSH

Iraq war figured prominently.

Asked about proposals by Levin and others for a phased troop reduction, Bush said, "I believe it is very important ... to people making suggestions to recognize that the best military options depend upon the conditions on the ground."

While Democrats agree that troops should leave Iraq sooner rather than later, they worried aloud on the agenda. Rep. John Murtha, a Pennsylvania Democrat and a contender to become the next majority leader, supports an immediate withdrawal of all troops, while Levin and others have a down or phased withdrawal and have been reluctant to suggest a firm timetable.

Murtha and some others entered defense in Iraq will continue to long as US troops are present, but Levin and others warn that any withdrawal of troops have to occur slowly to avoid a collapse in security.

The commission, headed by former Secretary of State James A. Baker III and former Democratic Rep. Lee Hamilton, has been meeting for about eight months and it is considering a range of options. In addition to considering whether there should be new timetable to pull our troops, the panel is studying many other options, including whether to solicit help from Syria to help stop the fighting.

The president said he more than

Ang Cheong Yang shows his mobile phone to photographers during a short message service (SMS) competition in Singapore Nov. 13. REUTERS

Singaporean student is world's fastest texter

SINGAPORE—A Singaporean student broke the Guinness World Record for the shortest time needed to type a 160-character SMS message on a handset after whizzing through the task in more than 42 seconds in competition.

Sixteen-year-old Ang Cheong Yang typed the SMS (short message service) message in 40.32 seconds, beating the previous record of 42.22 seconds set by Vincent an Bee Cook in July, according to Singapore Telecommunications, organizers of the competition.

"It ws for 39 seconds and xcuz" said Ang, adding that the trick to speedy text messaging was to use a mobile phone with large keys on the dial pad.

SMS messaging competitions around the world saw the same SMS text recorded by the Guinness organization – "The cyberconfused members of the genera Incredulous and Hypocondriac are the most frivolous freshwater fish in the world. It's really they seldom attack clowns." Reuters

BUSH REBUFFED

US House junks key Vietnam trade bill

WASHINGTON—THE US HOUSE of Representatives rejected Monday a bill aimed at normalizing trade relations with Vietnam despite calls by President George W. Bush's administration to pass it ahead of his visit to the former battlefield country this.

The House voted 228 to 204 on the bill to grant "permanent normal trade relations" (PNTR) status to Vietnam, falling short of a requested two-thirds majority officials of the White House said.

The decision surprised many as legislators had spoken in favour of having the final bill in the session during US Veterans day ceremonies honoring Bush's visit to Vietnam to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation on Nov. 18-19.

Legislation to grant Vietnam PNTR status has been held up in Congress for months.

In its absence, US businesses will not benefit from the full terms of Vietnam's Bilateralization under the World Trade Organization (WTO). Hanoi was recent approved on becoming the 150th WTO member.

But Bush's Republican party lawmakers have not given up, seeing to bring up the bill for another vote and attempting to have it passed with a simple majority through an amendment of the House rules.

"The bill is expected to be brought up by a regular order on Wednesday of this week," said Brian Maddox, spokesman for House majority leader John Boehner of Bush's Republican party, which in last week's elections lost control of the new Congress beginning January 2007.

The rejection of the bill is seen as a setback to Bush as the Republicans currently control the 435 members House and 100-member Senate.

White House spokesman Tony Snow had appealed to Congress Monday to clear the bill "so Vietnam reforms, transitions and re-openness in order to the region," saying many other issued against it were "free lunches, the ranking Democrat in the House international relations committee.

"All Lantos will be voting against it as he view against all low trade related agreements for the simple reason that they are cruel unfair to US labor and do not necessarily promote equality for labor overseas," his spokeswoman Lynne Weil told AFP before the vote.

The ban time to be closed by the House before Bush could sign it into law.

Just ahead of the vote in the House Monday a senior US official said the Bush administration was hopeful the bill "will pass in the US Congress in the next few days and the President will have that to take to Hanoi as he visits Vietnam." In addition, the US State Department announced Monday it was dropping Vietnam from its blacklist of nations that severely violate religious freedom in what was seen as a reciprocal move. AFP

Roman shipwreck found off Spanish coast

MADRID—A SHIPWRECKED first-century vessel carrying delicacies to the richest palates of the Roman Empire has proved a dazzling find, with nearly 2,000-year-old fish bones still smelling inside clay jars, archaeologists said Mon. day.

Scanners found its cargo of hundreds of amphorae in 2000 when their anchor got tangled with one of the two landlocked jars.

After years of scraping, measuring and cross-exploration of the site off the coast of Alicante in southeastern Spain began in July, said Carlos de Juan, a co-director of the project, who works for the Alicante regional government.

The ship is estimated to have been 24 meters long with capacity for around 400 tons of cargo, making it twice the size of most other Roman shipwrecks found in the Mediterranean, de Juan said in an interview with the Associated Press.

This ship probably sank in a storm while sailing back to Rome from Cadiz in the south of what is now Spain. The storm must have been fierce because it is said his such a sized to have been so close to shore.

"The seas did not care about the cargo or money or anything. They broke and had to save their lives," de Juan said.

The height was an estimated 1,500 well-preserved clay amphoras, or two-handled jars, amidst the one to hold fish sauce — a prized condiment for wealthy Romans, he said.

Some of the hundreds of well-preserved clay amphoras or two-handled jars, most in the cast colored fish sauce that was a prized condiment for wealthy Romans, are seen in waters off Alicante, eastern Spain. AP

For centuries the waters off seaphores lay undisturbed but for occasional relicques that would pop ups open, breaking the serenity and tourists restricted of local residents.

Besides the size of the ship and good condition of its cargo, the site is also important because it is so easily accessible— in just 25 meters of water, about 1.5 kilometers from the coast. Other wrecks are so deep they cannot be examined by scuba divers.

The last time a ship of this size and quality emerged was in 1960 off Cartia, de Juan said.

Javier Nieto, director of the Centro de Underwater Archaeology of Catalonia and not related to the project, also called it immediately important because of the fine condition of the cargo. No other Roman shipwreck is currently under study in the world, de Juan said.

The cargo probably also included lead, which the Romans used for plumbing, and copper, which they mixed with tin to make bronze for everything from plates to jewelry.

The fish sauce is no longer in the amphoras because the seals were not hermetic and could not withstand 20 centuries under water. But traces of fish bone remain inside and these will help researchers determine how the sauce was made, de Juan said. AP

Giuliani eyes presidency

Rudy running
Former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani has taken the first step toward running for president in 2008.

Rudolph William Giuliani
BIRTH: New York City, Nov. 28, 1944
EDUCATION: B.A., Manhattan College, 1965; J.D., New York University Law School, 1968
FAMILY: Married three times; divorced twice; two children
1968-1973: Assistant U.S. attorney, Southern District of New York
1983-89: U.S. attorney, Southern District of New York
1985-89: Associate attorney general, U.S. Department of Justice
1989: Unsuccessful Republican candidate for mayor of New York City
1990-1993: Associate, Anderson Kill & Olick
1994-1997: Partner, Uhlmann, Giuliani & Rubenstein
1997-2001: Mayor of New York City
2002: Founder, Giuliani Partners
2003: Founder, Giuliani Capital Advisors
2004: Author, "Leadership"
2005: Founder, Giuliani Security & Safety

RUDOLPH W. GIULIANI, THE FORmer mayor of New York City, has taken the first step in mounting a presidential candidacy, forming an organization in New York state on Friday to explore a White House run.

Giuliani stopped short of filing documents with the Federal Election Commission to create a presidential campaign committee, a step that Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa, a Democrat, and US Sen. Duncan Hunter of California, a Republican, have taken.

"Mayor Giuliani has not made a decision yet," John K. Gross, a lawyer at Preskauer Rose and a volunteer campaign treasurer for Giuliani, said in a statement. "When the filing of the document, we have taken the necessary legal steps so an organization can be put in place and money can be raised to explore a possible presidential run in 2008."

New York Times News Service

Construction of Martin Luther King memorial starts

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT GEORGE W. Bush and civil rights leaders on Hilltop broke ground for a memorial to Martin Luther King, On first monument to an African-American not to be a president.

"The King Memorial will stand on a piece of ground between the Jefferson and Lincoln memorials and, by its presence in this place, it will center the men who declared the promise of America and defended the promise of America with the man who redeemed the promise of America," Bush said.

Nearly 5,000 people, including TV talk-show host Oprah Winfrey, former President Bill Clinton and poet Maya Angelou braved the cold to celebrate the life of the Nobel Peace Prize winner.

Speakers quoted King's sermons and speeches and paid tribute to his belief that non-violent protest could help end discrimination against black Americans.

Dreams unleashed

"As we turn these shovels we are not beginning to turn the dirt, and as we turn this dirt at this ground, let us go back to our communities and face the dire threats," said former King aide Andrew Young, urging attendees to continue the slain leader's work against racism, poverty and violence.

Democrat Barack Obama from Illinois, the only African-American in the US Senate and a possible presidential candidate in 2008, mentioned what to tell his daughters when they visit the monument.

"I will tell them this song goes to his moving others," Obama said. "I will tell them that dreams tend to be born somebody.

I will tell them that because he did those things they live today with the freedom God intended, their citizenship unquestioned, their dreams unbounded." Construction officials begin on the memorial adopted 4.0 hectare site in the spring and a scheduled to be completed in 2008.

Statue of hope

The memorial's centerpiece will be a "stone of hope," a boulder engraved with King's image and words from his "I Have a Dream" speech, which he delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963.

Organizers have already raised $85 million toward the estimated $100 million cost of the project, which is located in Washington, Democrats. By there, the 39-year-old Baptist minister had helped bespoke hours in Alabama to change segregation laws and led demonstrations. But, protested Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act.

Reuters

The WORLD
Editor Lorenzo B. Gozon

LARGEST MASS KIDNAPPING

150 researchers abducted in Iraq

BAGHDAD—GUNMEN IN IRAQI POLICE COMMANDO UNIforms kidnapped up to 150 staff members from a government research institute in downtown Baghdad on Tuesday morning in the largest mass abduction since the start of the US occupation.

Alaa Makki, head of the parliament's education committee, interrupted the body's session to say that between 100 and 150 people, both children and Iraqis, had been abducted in the 9:30 a.m. raid.

He urged the prime minister and ministers of interior and defense to respond rapidly to what he called a "national catastrophe."

Makki said the gunmen had a list of names of those to be taken and claimed to be on a mission from the government's anti-corruption body. Those kidnapped included the scientific institute's deputy general director, employees, and visitors, he said.

Police and eyewitnesses said gunmen had closed off surrounding streets during the 20-minute raid on the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. Scholarships and Cultural Relations Directorate in the downtown Karradah district. The institute is responsible for granting scholarships to Iraqi professors and students wishing to study abroad.

Police spokesman Maj. Hakki Hamed said the entire operation took about 20 minutes. Four guards at the institute put up no resistance and were unharmed, he said.

Eyewitnesses including a female professor sitting in the time of the kidnappings said the gunmen herded men and women into separate rooms, handcuffed the men, and loaded them aboard about pickup trucks. She said the gunmen, some of them masked, wore blue camouflage uniforms of the type worn by police commandos.

Shiite militias and other illegal groups are known to wear stolen or fake police and army uniforms.

The abductions were the most brazen in a series of killings and other attacks on Iraqi academics that are robbing Iraq of its brightest and prompting thousands of professors and researchers to flee to neighboring countries to escape the country's boiling lawlessness and revolutionary turmoil.

Recent weeks have seen a university dean and prominent Sunni geologist murdered, bringing the death toll among educators to at least 250 since the war began. The academics apparently were singled out for their relatively high public stature, vulnerability and known views on controversial issues in a climate of deepening Islamic fundamentalism.

Ali al-Adeb, a Shiite lawmaker, said there was little question Tuesday's incident was a terror kidnapping and demanded that US troops held responsible for the security lapse.

"The abduction of 150 people from a government institution without informing the higher education minister ... means this is an abduction operation," al-Adeb said.

"There is a political goal behind this grave action," he said.

The abductions came just hours after a US assault on the northern Baghdad Shiite district of Sadr City that drew strong condemnation from al-Adeb and other Shiite members of parliament.

Sadr is a stronghold of radical anti-American Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, operator of one of Iraq's most powerful and feared militias, the Mahdi Army. AP

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Cavs stop Knicks; Sonics blast Nets/A34

SPORTS

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Erik will go for early KO–Manny

By Francis Ochoa

LAS VEGAS—FILIPINO ring hero Manny Pacquiao has no doubt that Erik Morales will go all out to knock him cold early in their Grand Finale showdown on Saturday (Sunday morning in Manila) here.

"He's going to try and knock me out in the early rounds," Pacquiao told the Inquirer in Filipino.

"That's the only chance he's got. He'll try to get me before he tires out."

After a first night in the city where he conquered the world, Pacquiao said he is looking forward to thwarting the Mexican boxing legend yet again.

"I'm confident," Pacquiao said.

Asked if his pressure mate of mind could spill over to overconfidence, he chuckled his remark. "I have lots of confidence in myself." (See related stories on A33)

A DIGITAL billboard above the main entrance of the Wynn Hotel in Las Vegas plays the teaser of the Pacquiao-Morales Grand Finale showdown. EDMUND SAN

The countdown to the mega-fight, the third and final encounter between the Filipino icon and the Mexican known as "El Terrible," has ticked down to just five days and Pacquiao is ready to cap his toughest training in his career.

The hard-hitting southpaw also expects Morales to stay away from a phone-booth bout and by opening up ring space and moving around a lot.

"There's a chance he will run," Pacquiao said. "In fact, if he gets hit hard and feels the pain, he'll start running.

"I really feel he's going to attack," Pacquiao added. "He's got a lot of pride. We're going to hurt each other anyway, why not get on with it right away?"

Whatever Morales does, for Pacquiao, it doesn't matter.

"If he charges but lets his guard down then all the better," he said, adding such a move will allow him to neutralize Morales to his right hook, a new weapon that is slowly becoming acquaint as his pet left straight.

And with the knowledge that Morales has retired just as hard, Pacquiao said that at the final bell, win or lose, he will have no excuses.

"Even the fight ends [no matter what happens], there'll be no excuses," said the 27-year-old pride of Gen. Santos City. "Morales has trained differently this time."

And to Jose Pacquiao.

He has doubled road work every morning. And he has sparred a total of 137 rounds, the most in his career.

Pacquiao also expects Morales to make the 130-pound weight limit, an issue that has become almost synonymous in the Nov. 19 super featherweight fight at the Thomas and Mack Center.

"I think he's going to make it," said Pacquiao (42-3-2, 32 KOs).

Morales (48-4, 34 KOs) is bound by contract to pay $500,000 for every pound he weights above the weight limit.

Then, with a naughty smile on his face and his eyebrows raised, Pacquiao said: "They moved the weigh-in early. This gives him more time to recover."

The weigh-in is slated at 2:30 p.m. Thursday (the previous hours with Morales had 4 p.m. schedule).

CHRIS Birchall (left) and Phil Younghusband (right) celebrate a Philippine goal in the first half. AGUS SUAREZ, AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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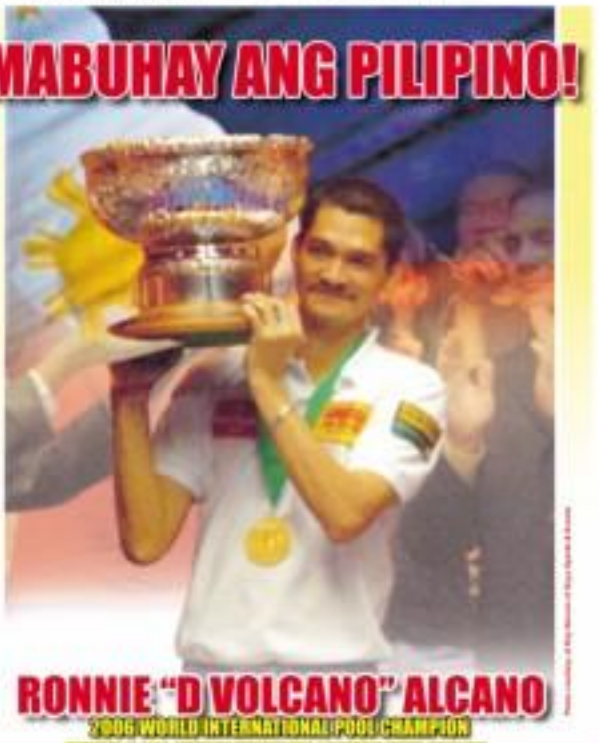

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MAS PANGMATAGALAN

BIG BOUNCE BACK

RP booters bomb raw Timor Leste

By Cedell P. Tigas
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—A REMARKable goal scoring display from Filipino striker Phil Younghusband propelled the Philippines to a massive 7-0 victory over unknown Timor Leste to keep its qualification hopes alive in the Asian Football Championships at the Panaad Park and Stadium here.

The 19-year-old Younghusband, who plays for the Chelsea reserves in England, typified a glorious night for the RP booters, striking four goals as the Philippines bounced back from a 2-1 defeat at the hands of Laos Sunday night.

"I'm overwhelmed, my mom is going to be so proud," said Younghusband, whose mother, Susan Pinoy hails from Manila.

"Our team showed its potential," said coach Ark Cadlle, who guided the Filipinos to only their second victory in the history of the tournament. "They (players) know what's at stake and they delivered."

See the Philippines still needs to beat Cambodia on Saturday and Armenia on Monday to advance to the final tournament that will be hosted by Singapore and Thailand.

Younghusband and Chris Greatwich played a brilliant 1-2 from the edge of the area and the 19-year-old Chelsea striker buried in the opening goal with his left shot in the 22nd minute.

Four minutes later, Younghusband got his second marker by sending his penalty into the left forward corner, after Ariel Estrada was fouled by Timor Leste's Miguel Da Silva inside the box.

Midfielder Jeffrey Lisondra provided an over-lobbing Greatwich with a delicately placed through ball and the Fil-British midfielder made no mistake to make it 3-0 in the 27th minute.

"We played better individually, that's why we played better as a team," Cassurado said. "I don't think we have any reason to be scared in this tournament, following this win."

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Trim but sullen Morales checks in

By Franck Gobos

LAS VEGAS—HIS FACE CRUMPLED INTO A scowl, Erik Morales surfaced here late Monday night after a nearly four-hour flight from Tokoss, Mexico, just five days before he steps into the ring to face undefeated Manny "Pacquiao on Nov. 18 at the Thomas and Mack Center.

Unlike Pacquiao, who arrived here in a long entourage that trailed from Los Angeles, where he trained for this match, Morales arrived in a group of three relatives about an hour before midnight.

Very little fanfare marked his arrival at the Wynn Hotel as he got in through the discreet Tuscany Suites entrance instead of the main lobby, the same play Pacquiao pulled off to avoid a crowd rush.

The 30-year-old Mexican superstar looked stressed—but sullen—upon his arrival, wearing a brown khaki jacket and jeans.

He was in a group that included his father Jose and manager from the Whitely camp, whom he worked out his weight problems to make sure he would have no problems when he tips the scales on Friday.

If his arrival is any indication, Morales is likely to sidestep Pacquiao a lot in the third match of the highly anticipated rivalry.

Morales stepped off the SUV that brought him from the airport in the hotel in dash-and-dagger fashion, eluding journalists, photographers and camera men who waited for him for hours.

When he was spotted behind another SUV, he played cat-and-mouse with a television camera man from the Philippines, keeping the vehicle in between him and the person trying to take a video of him.

Even his father refused to talk to reporters.

While walking toward the hotel elevator, Morales waved off a journalist trying to take a photograph of him and continued marching with his fists clipped into his chest so as not to give anybody a clear shot at him.

Morales has been fortunate in avoiding with the Mexican's experts to find a way to thin down to the 130-lb super featherweight limit without sapping his energy.

Many experts attributed his last defeat to the opponent—the one that sapped their boxer-turned matchup—to the three-time world champion's problems in entering the super featherweight limit.

Pacquiao's American trainer, Freddie Roach, reiterated his training regimen, saying Morales was working out to meet the weight limit and of preparing to fight. But Pacquiao believes Morales has trained well enough to meet the scales and put up a good fight in their scheduled 12 rounders.

MORALES plays cat-and-mouse with a Filipino TV cameraman.

No missing Vegas 'boxing at its best'

LAS VEGAS—THIS IS HOW BIG THIS TWO OF clashes are:

Named firmly on Las Vegas menus is some-size pillar that holds a huge electronic screen flashing the headlines of the slogans' fifty-cent-ril and casino.

It's main feature is Pacquiao-Morales III. The Grand Finale, and aside the din of vehicles, one can catch a conversation's worst referring to the bouts between these two as "beating it to be best."

Inside the hotel, in a corner room where live was major money on upcoming events, the up-dates on the bouts odds are flashed regularly on a dot matrix screen.

So far, Manny Pacquiao, the Filipino hero who has morphed into a global phenomenon, is the overwhelming favorite at minus 220, while Erik Morales, the Mexican legend, is at plus 175.

Odds also favor the fight not going the distance, with Pacquiao picked most likely to end the match in the later rounds.

Fight tickets are selling briskly and Shelley Finkel, Pacquiao's manager, believes everything will be sold out by Thursday.

"All the $500 tickets are gone," Finkel announced. "The $1000 are almost sold out too."

Finkel said there are also 10,000 tickets for closed-circuit television spectators. Francis Cabrera

Pacquiao: I'm not better than Morales

BARE EYE

Rivah Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—BEEN ALL SEEN MANNY Pacquiao at his fiercest best. He serves fists to manpower intensity into the clinched foes, big fists, wins or lose.

Well, in once you've trained it, Pacquiao could also rate a couple interviews into an unforgettable performance, a knockout of his.

He did exactly that after his final workout at the WBO Gym gym in Hollywood on Saturday.

In an exclusive one-on-one with GMA-7, Pacquiao vowed to knock out his own gross ingenuity of invincibility.

"Still, Morales is not an enemy [blind date: footway]," Pacquiao declared. "I respect him both as a counted boxer."

* * *

He had already said that before.

But the statement, made at a point when the Pacquiao-Morales ring feud has hit an explosive phase, had a jarring effect.

You see, Pacquiao may not jumble words in the stunning manner of his humus and unwrapplished trainer.

But, at the same time, the hard-punching world boxing celebrity cannot be ranked a smooth speaker.

Pacquiao could, indeed, deliver his message in English, but often after mixing the language down to the floor.

Anyway, on Saturday out there at the hall-lit gym, after a brisk rub, Pacquiao performed a mantra while allowing himself to be interviewed.

* * *

"We are all equal [Dios pareho lamang kasi]," he explained softly. "I'm not better than Morales."

Pacquiao added: "I dont believe [to greater than anybody [hindi mataas. Di ko inilipa ako sa iba]."

He begged not to be counted like the Manny Pacquiao in the hearts and minds of his fans. He's not that big, Pacquiao said.

If he has ever succeeded, Pacquiao explained, it's all due to big sacrifices and extreme hard work.

And, of course, because of his God. (Let her going on Beginning Here!)

* * *

He obviously did not realize it, but Pacquiao, in that interview, had started to work at being lovable.

He was bravely refusing to be pinned down by impatience and heavy pressure at history.

He was working at a different kind of aloofness.

In fact, he went so far to say with his own myth of courage: "I'm a nervous sort of fellow [in asking pass, me labot ako ako]."

Still, he could be trying to pull a fast one, but Pacquiao sounded and looked nervous and very sincere.

"I pray for Morales, I pray for both of us, that nothing bad happen in me in the fight," Pacquiao said.

That's a little vague.

But if Pacquiao is able to put up better defense and transmits this new-found aloofness into the ring on Saturday (Sunday morning in Manila), something bad might happen to his adversary.

* * *

(BAYER: International promoter Jay Bautista has sent a text message from Macau to us earned an invitation to fight time: "Celebrity boxing, Bahubalan ibet 2, will be held at Star City Nov. 18, presented by MBC. Our guys on Batman Street in Quezon City will show live Pacquiao-Morales—live to our members. Our guys is the most modern in Asia.")

METRO

Citizen's Call

Our City of Affections and Disaffections is made up of stories.
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- Street diggings forever on the street where you live?
- Are you up in arms against the demolition of an ancestral house?
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- Got stuck in potholes?
- Fed up with cussing and feuding neighbors?
- Is there an everyday role model in your neighborhood?
- Delightful/dreadful finds on your way to work?

Tell, text us about it. With photos, if you will. Share the good news where you are—and the bad. Being involved is the only way to make our city a safer, saner, healthier and an exciting place to live in.

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'Rusty' Archers go up against proud Tigers

LA SALLE'S TWO WINS IN A ROW hardly impressed coach Franz Pumaren.

Still not as sharp and cohesive as he'd like, the Archers will test their mettle against UAAP champion University of Santo Tomas Tigers in the HSBC-Flying V Intercollegiate Invitational Cup at 12 noon today at the Philsports arena.

"We're still not in game condition," said Pumaren. "For sure feeling my way as a coach after a long absence. Because just like a boxer, we're only born sparring. It's still quite difficult."

The Archers, serving a one-year suspension in the UAAP for fighting (see stories below), passed the young tournament with triumphs over the talent-laden Ateneo Blue Eagles and the former Blue Eagles.

Pumaren's younger brother Dindo and his University of the East Warriors will open their bid versus the winless former Blue Eagles at 2 p.m.

The Eagles, struggling with a young roster, have been sorely missing the pre-

LA SALLE's rejoicing JV Cesio drives past Ateneo's Karl Escamis in Sunday's game.

ence of team stars JC Intal, Doug Kramer and Mardy Escalona.

Flashing their vaunted pressure defense, the Archers repulsed the Eagles, 66-58, last Sunday. JV Cesio paced the offensive charge with 15 points.

The Archers, though, will be competing against a hotter cup Tigers, after hours drenching between the young collegiate tournament and the PBL.

After clinching the UAAP crown last month, the Tigers have yet to win a game. In the opener, the Tigers bounced to the four-tournament fringe, 72-71.

Freddie Abad leadable Player Ariel Ostrilad led the Tigers with 19 points, while rookie standout Aaron Cruz finished with 13 points and 11 rebounds.

The Warriors, meanwhile, will be fielding in the same formidable roster that ravaged the Collegiate Champions league title, bolstered by Warry Antolano, Mark Barkwon and Rolvin Dengcio.

Capping the heavy-foot game left over the Far Eastern Intrastown and the San Beda Lions roster at 4 p.m. and the 6 p.m. match between Jose Rizal and the Letran Knights. —Jasmine B. Arao

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Shell celebrates its Guinness World Record for Fuel Economy in the Philippines
Around the World on Only 24 Tanks

Manila, Philippines (24 October 2006) – It was not long ago when news broke on Shell's Guinness World Record for Fuel Economy around the world. After 78 intense days of driving around the world, John and Helen Taylor together with Shell have earned a triumphant record for the most fuel efficient circumnavigation of the world ever undertaken in a standard car, completed using only 24 tanks of Shell fuel. Now, Shell wants to spread the word and celebrate its Guinness World Record feats in the Philippines.

Let's take a look back at their record-breaking drive.

The Taylors left on London January 17, and they returned having covered 24,979 kilometers, across 33 countries, in 78 days of driving. But the most significant statistic of all is this: they have done so using just 1,569 liters of fuel. This means that they averaged 22.2 kilometers per liter – a completing and phenomenal performance considering the official VW figures over the combined cycles (a combination of urban and non-urban cycles) for the VW Golf TDI is 16.9 mpg (mpg) or 7.0 L/100km (14.3 km/l).

During the journey, they encountered every extreme of temperature, climate and terrain. However, despite these intense conditions, the record was achieved through a combination of Shell fuels and fuel additives. Shell's driving greatness, John says "Getting this trip together was the realization of a great ambition for Helen and myself. A true technical challenge for the fuel, and a real test of endurance for all the teams involved. And to possibly have set a record with Shell!"

"We are committed to developing better fuels for Filipino motorists and have had over 70 years of innovation to give them the most efficient motorists' needs for greater fuel efficiency and are specifically designed to take drivers the like," explains Carl Pomales, Lubes Category Management Philippines & North Pacific Islands. "Nowadays, drivers like you and me look for ways to drive more efficiently, thereby saving money. John and Helen Taylor are a testament to Shell fuels and to the power plus of fuel efficient Fuel Saver driving."

Jeremy De Guzman, General Manager Shell Retail Philippines, commented "In the spirit of the last fantastic accomplishment, we're looking forward to helping everyday drivers achieve greater fuel efficiency no matter where they live or what they drive – setting their own personal records."

Philippine Shell joins the global celebration of the Guinness World Record by bringing John and Helen Taylor to the Philippines for a series of events, and a record-breaking raffle of making 10 millionaires for a day.

We've helped break world records for speed. Now, a new record is set, attesting to our commitment to take you further. Each day, our team of specialists finds ways of improving the way you drive. We've been doing this for 70 years now. So don't be surprised if this seems like a big deal. After so many years, it's time our victories involved the real winners: our customers. Shell Fuels. Helping you go further.

Made to move

See John and Helen Taylor, Guinness World Record Holders for Fuel Economy at:
The Shell Fuel Economy Clinic, 9am to 3pm on Nov. 29 - The Forum, PICC, Manila; Dec. 4 - Cebu Country Club, Cebu; Dec. 5 - Davao Convention Center, Davao

Thai, Japanese keep titles as open scoring adopted

TOKYO—THAILAND'S Daglis Kyosen and Japan's Hironori Ishiguma successfully defended their WBC titles in a Tokyo double-header on Monday night.

Daglis held on to his WBC featherweight belt, winning a unanimous decision against Mexican challenger Lorenzo Trejo, while Ishiguma also scored a unanimous decision over Mexico's Genaro Garcia to retain his bantamweight title.

The titles bouts saw the adoption of "open scoring"—the announcement of the judges tallies at the end of the fourth and eighth rounds, rather than just at the end of the contest.

Open scoring was adopted at the WBC convention in Croatia last month.

Japan-based Kyosen improved his ratio four-oh-one to 17-1 with the victory in Nippon Budokan.

"I have my right hit and I didn't have the speed I needed because of a lack of training," Japanese scorer agency Kioshi quoted Kyosen as saying. "It was hard to determine the pattern of my opponent's punches. I felt that he was very polished and has a wealth of experience. It was a very valuable win but I am not satisfied with my performance."

Trejo, on the other hand, was not satisfied with the result.

"I thought I won the bout, so I'm very disappointed," he said.

Ishiguma, who improved to 23-2, knocked Garcia in the canvas in the fourth and eighth rounds and appeared confident throughout. Boxers

WELL?? Ishiguma delivers a right to Genaro Garcia in Round 8.

ORLANDO Magic's Dwight Howard shoots with authority against the Boston Celtics

Cavs stop Knicks; Sonics blast Nets

NEW YORK—LEBRON JAMES AND DAMON Jones took turns carrying Cleveland and scored 29 points apiece, leading the Cavaliers over the New York Knicks, 102-96, for their third straight NBA victory Monday.

Jones kept Cleveland in the game in the first half with 20 points, and made seven 3-pointers to raise was easily his best game of the season. James scored 10 in the second half, and also set up Jones by Donyell Marshall and Anderson Varejao in the fourth quarter, both after New York had closed within two points.

Nate Robinson scored 19 points and led the Knicks' bench with a six-point deficit, but New York fell to 0-3 at Madison Square Garden this season. Jamal Crawford had 16 and Channing Frye added 17, ending his homeless slant to the season.

Supersonics 110, Nets 112

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Luke Ridnour scored a career-high 32 points and Seattle opened a 20-point, third-half lead, but then held off a late Nets Jersey rally on route to a 110-112 victory.

Rashard Lewis added 27 points, Ray Allen and Oyo Wilson had 22 apiece for the Supersonics who were the first to get within five points by the final 1:19 when Ridnour netted the game-with four free throws.

Vince Carter had a season-high 39 points, Marcus Bertie added 21, and Jason Kidd had 20 points, 12 assists and six rebounds.

Magic 92, Celtics 89

At Boston, Jameer Nelson scored 24 points and Grant Hill added 18 to lead Orlando over Boston, 92-89.

Dwight Howard had 17 points and 15 rebounds for the Magic, who have won four of five after starting the season 1-2.

After the Magic squandered an 11-point third-quarter lead, Hills driving layup with 1:36 remaining made the score 88-84 and gave Orlando the final lead. Fielding a Jerome Moiso miss, Tyson Anter made one free throw and Nelson scored on a layup to make it a two-possession game.

Nelson then followed a Paul Pierce basket with a 22-footer with 12 seconds remaining to seal the game. AP

NBA ON TV (Cignal Ch 69)
8:30 a.m.—Denver vs. Miami (8:30 p.m. replay) 10:30 a.m.—Toronto at Atlanta (8:30 p.m. replay)

SLAM dunk for Yao

Yao, Johnson share honors

NEW YORK— DAO MING OF THE HOUSTON Rockets and Joe Johnson of the Atlanta Hawks were named Western Basketball Association players of the week here Monday.

Chinese 2.26m center Yao captured the Western Conference honor after leading Houston to four victories in six days, averaging 29 points on 10.7 percent shooting with 11.2 rebounds a game and 90.1 percent free throw shooting.

Yao is averaging 27.3 points a game, 9.6 percent above his career average and ahead of Portland's Zach Randolph for eighth among the NBA's top scorers.

Johnson, who took Eastern Conference honors, ranks fifth with 26.8 points a game and is the first player in Atlanta history to score at least 25 points in the first six games of the season. AFP

SHANGHAI MASTERS

Blake stuns Nadal; Davydenko wins

SHANGHAI—JAMES BLAKE showed he was not in Shanghai just to make up the numbers when he produced a quality performance to upset world number two Rafael Nadal, 6-4, 7-6, in his opening second-rubber match at the Masters Cup on Monday.

The 26-year-old American like last year's winner David Nalbandian this first player to qualify for the event, came back from a break down in the first set and recovered from a 4-6 defeat in the second to triumph 7-4 in a one-sided tiebreak.

"I'm not out of the last gun, I actually see the 'last gun' Blake said after his first Masters Cup match. "I'm the gun that's supposed to be the easy matchup... which should help my confidence too much. But I'm just happy to be here."

Nadal, also making his debut in the event after missing last year's season-ender through injury, started both sets well but seemed rattled when Blake refused to just lie down after being broken.

"The problem is not my game because I was playing very good... But in the important moments I lose my confidence," Nadal said.

Nikolay Davydenko, the world number three, beat a third Masters Cup debutant in Spain's Fernando Robredo, 7-6, 3-6, 6-1, in the other first-round encounter.

Blake matched the muscular Spaniard's forehand power and consistency from the baseline but his boss doing on his backhand as they indulged the crowd with some thunderous rallies.

Both players had to save break points early in the first set but the French Open champion was the first to convert one, using a 9-7 lead when the world number eight served.

There was nothing wrong with the New Yorker's range, however, when he faced a backhand overhead to break back in the next game and he held serve with ease before breaking again to win the set when Nadal netted.

Nadal raced to a 4-0 lead at the start of the second set and it looked like the contest was headed for a rout.

"I'm not something I'm really proud of, to get down like I was against one of the best players in the world and not hanging on board, not try to change tactics, not do anything outside of my comfort zone. I was playing very passive and it's not the way I play," Blake said.

Blake broke Nadal when the 20-year-old was serving for the set. Reuters

JAMES Blake pulverizes after tossing Rafael Nadal, 6-4, 7-6 (7-3), a

Calamba sets hero's welcome for Alcano

CALAMBA CITY—THE CITY GOvernment of Calamba has prepared a big hero's welcome for Eduardo Alcano, who dumped former Taft Senator to win the 2006 World Pool Championship at the Philippine International Convention Center.

Mayor Joaquin Chipeco Jr. said he had organized a special committee to prepare for a grand welcome for the Calamba native who is expected to arrive here this morning.

"He's a world champion. He just brought great pride to our city but still give a grand welcome that a world champion like him deserves," Chipeco said in an interview with the Inquirer on Monday.

He said they had scheduled a big motorcade around the city because "I know every Calambeño wants to see and congratulate him."

He said they would also prepare a special program to be held at the city hall grounds, followed by a luncheon at Alcano's house.

Chipeco said they were also talking with the organizers of Miss Earth 2006 beauty contest to accommodate the candidates of the pageant's scheduled visit to the city hall to be held at a resort here on Thursday. Marlou Romero, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Tagaytay Spring stops Pagadian

DASMARIÑAS, CAVITE—TAGAYTAY SPRING chipped a two-game slide Sunday night by beating the Pagadian Bayberries, 83-75, in the 2006 Spring Cooking Oil-MBC National Cup basketball tournament here.

With 15 points, Ben Gonzalez led four Tagaytay Spring players in double figures as they chalked up their fifth win in eight games in the crime-hound tourney.

The Cooking Oil Masters of MBC president Nathaniel "Tal" Padilla and executive prop and Tagay Mayor Bambol Tolentino also drew big gulps from Danny Cagahiro and the basketball tandem of Gilbert Flor and Achie Mumar.

Cagahiro chipped in 13 while Flor and Mumar scored 12 apiece as Tagaytay Spring hushed a poor start to rein in South Cotabato on second.

After trailing for most of the second half, Tagaytay Spring made its move in the third quarter, outscoring Pagadian, 26-17, to take its eight-point lead which it never relinquished.

Jhelo Bonoan and Jessie Bhelcastajar joined Mumar, Ramsey Co's Raphael Reyes with 10 points, respectively, but failed to get support from the rest of the team.

Pagadian will visit each Unit Finance Corp. tomorrow as it tries to regain its bearing after absorbing three straight losses.

BY TOP CHOICE

'I won't take the gold medallion off'

By Christine O. Avendaño

IF WORLD POOL CHAMPION ROBERTO "ROBbie" Alcano had his way, he wouldn't take off anymore the gold medallion he got from President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday.

Two days after becoming an overnight sports hero and household name for topping the 2006 World Pool Championships Alcano found himself in Malacañang where he was conferred the Order of Lakandula with the Rank of Champion by President Arroyo.

"I never imagined I would be given such an award by the President," he told reporters as he proudly showed off the gold medallion on his neck and the P1-million check she handed to him by the Chief Executive, courtesy of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

"If it's possible, I wouldn't take (the) gold medallion (off)."

It was the second time he said he met Mrs Arroyo, the first being last year when he and other pool members of the Southeast Asian Games were invited to celebrate with a thanksgiving

The 34-year-old Alcano said that like most players, the desire to win is a match was always foremost on his thoughts.

He said that he had been playing pool since he was 14 years old, as he noted how his aunt Ate Glo Calimbo, Lagunas bank then operated a billiards hall.

Looking back at his triumphant moments Alcano acknowledged that when he eliminated billiards champion Efren "Bata" Reyes in his bid for the championship, he thought he might probably just make it

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo confers the "Kampeon Bakang Bilog" award on Renato Alcano at Malacañang. Awaiting her is Vice President Noli de Castro

Realtors out to mock the trend against Tigers

STANDINGS

	W	L
Sta. Lucia	7	1
Red Bull	6	2
Cimeira	6	4
Pacific Bells	6	4
San Miguel	5	4
Talk 'N Text	3	5
Air21	4	5
Welcoat	3	5
Cyrus-Cola	3	6
Alaska	2	7

GAMES TODAY
(Ranao Coliseum)
9:00 a.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Pacific at Cola
1:30 p.m.—Red Bull vs Welcoat

IT'S FAST BECOMING A TREND IN THE TALK 'N TEXT-PBA (Philippine Cup)—Inferior teams coming up with remarkable victories over supposedly superior opponents.

Newcomer Welcoat stunned Talk 'N Text, Air21 shocked Red Bull in an out-of-town tiff and, recently, the Phone Pals bounced back from a humbling loss by routing Barangay Ginebra, handing down the strongest squeal in terms of masterwork.

Sta. Lucia beating the league leader for the first time in years, tries to avoid the same decision when it battles victory-starved Coca-Cola today at the Araneta Coliseum.

"Confidencing is not a problem," said Sta. Lucia Realty coach Alfrancis Chua. "We just have to stay focused all the time."

Chua will also be asking a lot from his gunners, especially sensational rookie Kelly Williams, the Realtors' new rules-charger guy in offense.

Of course, Dennis Espino, Kenneth Duremdes, Paolo Hernandez and Marlon Aquino continue to be dependable, but guys like Jino Calingacion, Cesar Catli, Jeffrey Ombao and rookies Dennis Bugbao and Williams contribute a bundle to the Realtors' recent successes.

Williams, the season's top second-pick, came up with imposing figures...22 points on top of 12 rebounds and four steals—as the Realtors clamped the Alaska dam and overdrained the sole lead.

With seven elements against one defense and a disenheartened opponent to boot, Sta. Lucia is poised to pull away from the field with another win halfway through the elimination round.

Sta. Lucia's chosen pursuer, Red Bull, is losing a scenario that has always pushed the Bulls to the limit. After a big blow against the Air21 Express, the Bulls aim to improve their second-running 6-3 slate against San Miguel Beer in the other game.

The Brewmen snapped a five-game cost and fell to 5-4 when they got shackled by the Gin Kings last time out.

Coach Chito Narvasa's troops remain formidable though with key players Danny Seigle and Dennis Espinosa getting into the groove after being sidelined by injuries in the first few outings.

Jane Sarmiento

Asean schools gymnastics fires off today

By Jasmine W. Payo

EXPECT SUSTAINED INJECT FROM THE PHILIPPINE junior team in the 12th Asean Schools Gymnastic Championship.

"A simple routine but perfect," said national gymnastics coach Benny Tg. "The coaches' thought it's time that they will accept this gymnast—how steady they would be, how flawless, no wobbles. The crucial part is always the landing."

Four medals will be at stake today in the individual all-around and team artistic competitions.

The men's artistic event will start at 9 a.m., right before the 1 p.m. opening ceremony. Men's action will begin at 3 p.m.

Stars from Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Frederick Low Boon and Kho Seok-London will lead the ISP campaign in the artistic competitions.

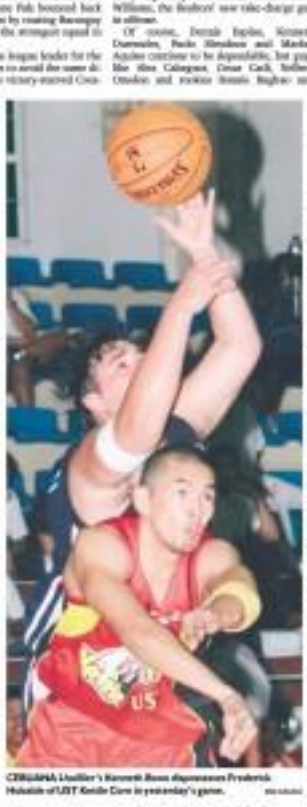
Nico Calingasan, a bronze medalist in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games, will lead the six-national team in the rhythmic event starting Friday.

"They are the top juniors in the Philippines," said Tg. "They've been training for three months. They've been doing weekly training."

The Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore will vault, Brunei in 14 gymnasts, while Indonesia will parade 16 participants in the four-day competition.

A total of 32 gold medals will be up for grabs in the individual and team events—eight in the men's artistic, six in the women's artistic and six in rhythmic.

"Four medals will be good enough," said Tg.



CERGAMA Lhuillier's Kenneth Bono dispossesses Frederick Hukabde of UST Kenzie Core in yesterday's game.

C. Lhuillier five sizzles in debut; Sparks prevail

By Jasmine W. Payo

DEBUTING CERGAMA LHUILLIER PUSA PAdida started hot to scratch Aztec Aces 4.01, 99-72, yesterday in the PBL Silver Cup at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque.

The Sharpeners garnered the Tigers with a 21-0 burst and their intensity never ebbed up in the final buzzer as they found their potential to challenge the league's creation teams.

In the second game, Meet in Cmo took charge in the final minutes to fill the Tigers Cmo Sparks to a 68-64 victory over the favored Tech Bull Titans.

Coach Luigi Trillo hailed from the Mountain-area only had a couple of weeks of practice for the Silver Cup, though they played as if they've been together for a long time.

The Sharpeners seasoned behind UAAP Most Valuable Player Ken Bono, who drilled in 13 of his 19 points in the first half.

And even with Bono resting on the bench in the closing quarters, Doug Kramer and Don Dulay kept the Sharpeners far from reach.

"We only had two weeks but the good of the way they tried to embrace the system," said Trillo. "Individually, our players are good. So I'm happy

Cyril Jose scores off his nine points in the last six minutes, including a split line throw that pegged the final tally with 4.5 seconds remaining. The game also grabbed a crucial rebound after muffing his seventh fourtrip to protect the Sparks' lead.

Assistant coach Adol Mongardo called the shots as coach Louie Alas marshal on the bench. The Sparks claimed it was part of their game plan.

The scores:

FIRST GAME

CERGAMA-LHUILLIER (99)—Bono 19, Kramer 18, Dulay 12, Arnaiz 11, Alcantara 10, Santos 10, Mendoza 6, Escalona 6, Ortiz 5, Gregorio 2, Dela Cuesta 2, Yee 1, Bagacol 0, Co 0, Tagaca 0, De G

AZTEC ACES-4.01 (72)—Ochoa 19, Evangelista 12, Hernando 8, Santos 8, Dane 8, Santos 6, Ocampo 5, Daniel 4, Chow 2, Santos 2, Cachapero 2, Abreu 2, Arena 0

Quarters: 25-17, 48-38, 73-52, 99-72

Second Game

TECH BULL (68)—Abanes 19, Cruz 15, Bathalan 8, Calaunan 7, Rodriguez 6, Chua 5, Balagot 5, Salud 2, Lucero 1, Gutierrez 1, Aguilar 0, Tamayo 0, Abad 2, Tuazon 0

TRI-STATE (64)—Capao 12, Colpitan 12, Abarca 8, Estrada 7, Alfonso 5, Orosco 5, Magpayo 4, Valenzuela 2, Lalagan 1, Cruzado 0, Sacl

Quarters: 15-11, 31-31, 49-48, 68-64

Fil-Am qualifier shows door to 2nd seed

FILIPINO-AMERICAN QUALIFIER WARREN CRAZ earned second-seeded American Chrissie Saroski, 6-2, 6-3, yesterday to reach the second round of the $10,000 Hakim ITF Women's Circuit 2 at the Hotel Mediterranean Tennis Center.

The 5-foot-10 Craz, whose Filipino parents migrated to the United States 32 years ago, watched behind a solid baseline game to beat world No. 620 Saroski.

The 20-year-old Cruz, is a journalism graduate in the University of Southern California.

Other results: Lara Perkins (USC) d. Jessica Kirkar (GEO), 6-2, 6-2; Tamara Hagenaar (Neth) d. Jung Lin Jung (SK), 6-1, 6-4; Kim Jung (SK) d. Tara Snyder (USC), 6-4, 6-1; Hyo-jeong Lee (Korea) d. Mary Farrow Pyle (AF), 6-1, 2-1+1; Jung Ran (SK) d. Nicole Gibbs (FP), 6-1, 4-6, 6-4; Kim Ji-hyeong (SK) d. Chae Sangin (Chi), 6-1, 6-0; Ha Da (FR) d. Hee Jee (FR), 6-1, 6-1.

SPORTSWATCH

100 fights up as SJC derby gets going

FOR 24 CONTENDERS IN THIS YEAR'S EDITION OF THE SAN Juan Colosseo on the Makati St. staging derby featuring more than 100 fights. To be hosted by former Congressman Rudy Alfonso and backed by Sangguian Complex at 20:00, this derby will adopt the "Cut Ring and Queensberry" format. Alfonso will count on the support of the fellow members from the Pinoy Cockpit-based National Cockers Association (NCA) and UAE-based Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP). Meanwhile, the crowd-drawing MEGA Battalion National 9-dog derby (semifinal round) returns to the 18 at San Juan Coliseum.

5 champs join Aperdabel cocktest

THE DEFENDING CHAMPIONS AND 1 RUNNER-UP SET TO COMPETE IN Bakgwalbaga Cockpit's Aperdabel tournament's semi-derby on Dec. 1, 8, 15 and 14. 5 Defenders, Cockpit Kapatas Chito Miguel, John Chona and Vicente Bellosillo, on championships in the 10-derby (2000) slugfest recently, along with four-seasoned Sonny Bailey, Cockpit Kapatas. Expect to open pool on purse of P70 million. The tournament champion will drive home a Toyota Avanza 1.5. Preservation of cockfighters is on the happens, call 853-1575, 853-1658 or 853-9851. Meanwhile, 134 participants joined Bakgwalbaga's new festival, dubbed as Cockfighting Who Give Cock Aficionado Sunday.

NCAA-seen Raul Sia operates shows win National Capital Region Athletics Association League opening schedule on Nov. 18 during yesterday's PBA Forum at Pantaleon restaurant in Manila. With him are (from left) former players Lee Isaac, NCAA-MA president Tina Alcaraz and Peters advertising and promotions manager Charmaine Corrales.

Guidicelli rallies, snatches Karter of the Year honors

MATTEO Guidicelli tries to regain control after a 360-degree spin in the rain track.

GAMMON, OATES—A SUDDEN DOWNPOUR turned things around for Marco Guidicelli of Monteclaro Racing yesterday as he rallied to top the final leg and clinch honors of the Karter of the Year in the 2006 Shell Superkarting Series at the Carmona Circuit Philippines here.

Struggling in the early goings, Guidicelli finished fourth in Race 1 and seventh in Race 2, wiping out his finish in 11 point edge over Mother Rock Kingpin of Manila Jones from overtook him prior to the final race, 430-419.

"I was already losing hope," said Guidicelli. "I prayed to God and sought the guidance of my beloved late lola Vicente Bonato. The rain came as the answer, so I still gave it my best."

Starting from seventh place behind pacesetter Mario Bongarra of MBAH Racing and Sandiganbayan Guidicelli crept to fourth in the third lap and passed Bontigao in the fifth.

Later, he overtook three second-running Hirafuse drivers before running the lead from Bongarra in the 13th lap. Bongarra spun out later, providing room for Guidicelli's breakaway and a 430-420 victory over Bontigao.

Guidicelli, who also bagged the premiere Seconds 1:20.486, wrapped up the 20-lap final race in 17:15.830 or 2.468 seconds ahead of the 15-year-old Marcelo.

Rated K, as in Keon

By Percy Della

MY ROOM BUDDIES...NOW SPORTS EDITors and columnists—used I practically grew up with Michael Dizon in Cebu.

In the mid-seventies, we were a band of aspiring writers who led absent Bohemian lifestyles. Alike in those times was almost a manner idol...a young and well-assured sports-czar of his inchoate uncle.

Today, 30 years and change after his finale Rd. Project: Gaining Abe sports program, Mike still exerts inland reviews from my friends.

One sports editor not him without misbehaviors as the "biggest fake" in town. Another texted me something about the untold Marcos billions being donated to the country's sports development agenda. A well-known columnist from down the west about Michael—the unduly hospitable guy, my best says, has chosen to stylish kimer for good.

Anyway you slice and dice it, Mike remains good sports copy. One day they spit smears at him. Next day the sports brass of the major daily newspapers revere Mr. Dizon's benevolence against the people who have taken over as heads of sports.

In the light of the 15th Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, next month, Mr. Dizon's prospective is well-sought yet again.

The sports media want him to dissect the winning for previous outside by Filipino athletes, including their quest for other Olympic of treasures Lisa calls the holy grail of Philippine sports...the country's first Olympic gold.

So my buds got a pleasant surprise when told that Michael not only called by cell phone from Lamag City the chase to drop by our place by the sea in Gumlos, halfway on the road to his home in Baguio...only to change his mind at the last moment.

Anyway having been wounded one before

COMMENTARY

Michael's vacillation, my buds sees in spontaneity they wanted to talk any subject.

Question 1: Michael Phelps is potentially the gold medals to Doha, from three in the Busan brand four years earlier. Is that a realistic expectation or do we hear the Philippine Sport Commission chief's expectation gurgling down the john?

Question 2: Many those fans tell at about the Filipino 11 of the 219 Qatar-bound athletes, their true chances and a fearless forecast of your own.

Question 3: What are the inherent flaws in the present training program for athletes and what would you have done if you were in charge?

Having covered the guy years back, I thought a comment from Mike would be an ecstasy on Ted Bulos reinserting a pro in his exec perket at the end of a noviciate. As predicted by my gumsiders here Gus Espiritu-style, pronouncing "seconds" amid no American science.

But our columnist friend was right all along. We were pruners among by Mr. Bono who may have thought that discretion is the better part of valor.

For now.

He called and repeated his message by text. He'd rather not talk than get nagged "unpatriotic."

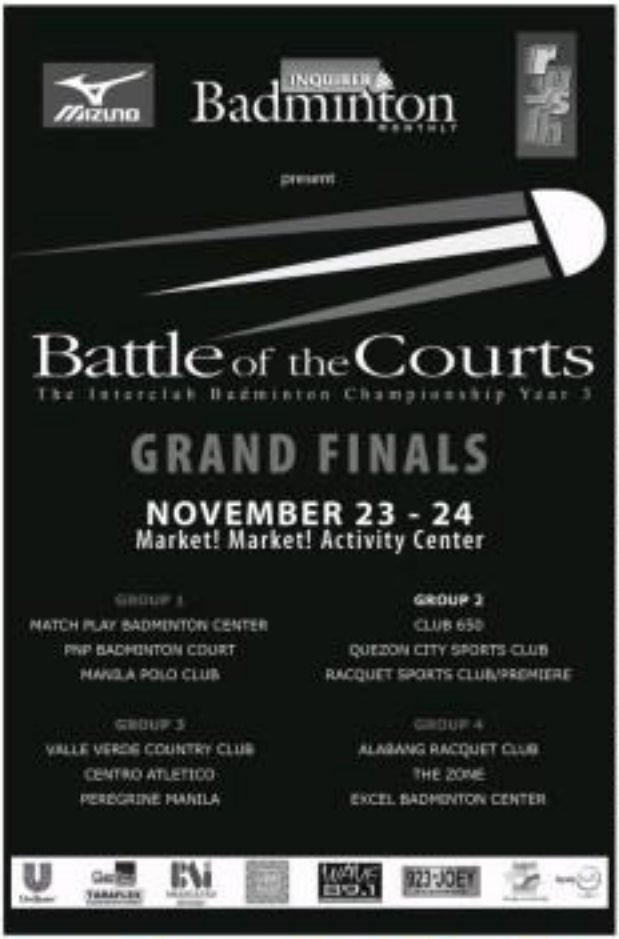
* * *

Among the many comments this corner received after our Oct. 28 piece "Tales of the 12,753 and homebrew game liveries," one truly stood out.

The commentary proved that looking back to one's youth melts even a grouch's heart.

Retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Nicanor Cueto-Jamias, who belonged to that basketball team of the inland boys in the late '50s and early '70s, wrote:

"Your depiction of the Cuyo was down to earth. In general, I was greatly overwhelmed. I am humbled to be a Cuyo."



SPORTS

WORLD JUNIOR POOL

RP's David stuns 4th seed Kiwi

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA—FILIPINO ROOKIE JOSE MA DAVID stunned fourth-seeded New Zealander Jonathan Pidduck, 9-4, late Monday in the World Junior 9-ball Championship at the BIL Club in Rooty Hill late Monday here.

The 17-year-old David, of Barangay Bayanan, Quezon City, topped the lopsided match with a golden break, his second in the tournament outdoor to players 19 years and under.

Coming off a 9-0 debut rounding of 15-year-old John Cervantes, of Ninggo Ninggo, Sorsogon Province, David ran out the first rack and cleaned up the second to set the tone of the match.

"Hindi ko intensyonal lang sina ungkatuhan, pero dinedma ko naman sila kahihiya e (I don't care whoever my opponents is, I don't know them anyway)," said the first Filipino representative in the arena of championship.

The 17-year-old Pidduck, joint ninth places in the 2004 edition of the tournament, got one off David's break on the 1ball to make it 1-2. But that was the closest he could get as the Filipino clustered three rack wins for a 5-1 advantage.

Aileen Huang, secretary-general of the Asian Pocket Billiards Union, was impressed.

"Sa (David) has a very solid break and accurate positioning," said Huang. "He also looks very confident on the table, which is rare for a newcomer."

David will face fourth-seeded Thomas Lausch in the third round Wednesday.

Lausch rallied from a 0-4 hole

(MVP) Back-to-back victories

to beat Daniel Hakim of the United States, 9-5. Hakim is a son of a Filipino residing in Daly City, California.

Two-time defending champion Wu Jia-hua of Chinese Taipei also scored his second straight win, beating debut Beobeyev of Ukraine, 9-4.

We have songsters and former World Pool champion Wu Chia-ching in the 2004 finals of the event.

The top-seeded Wu will meet another Ukrainian, Sergei Slavinski, in the next round. Slavinski posted a 9-2 victory over Diego Gomez of Venezuela. Marlon Bermudez, Cindi Bulos

Tigresses halt run of Lady Eagles

UNIVERSITY OF Santo Tomas handed an incoming freshman to end Arellano's three-game winning streak, 53-31, Sunday in the college level of the 2004 Mila Rosa Gomez Women's Basketball League at the Ateneo Blue gym.

UST was in complete control of the game, with Rachel Sangcaya scoring a game-high 17 points.

In other college games, St. Scholastica whipped Assumption, 53-35, and De La Salle-Lipa toppled UPV-Los Banos, 68-34.

UST and St. Scholastica share the college lead with identical 3-1 cards.

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Binay, Boy Scouts backtrack /B3
■ T-bonds hit all-time low of 6.2% /B10

BUSINESS
Editor Raul G. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

Makati court OKs rehab plan for CAP

SEC urged to help embattled pre-need firm

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE MAKATI REGIONAL TRIAL COURT HAS GIVEN EMBATTLED pre-need company College Assurance Plan Philippines (CAP) a second lease on life.

In a resolution dated Nov. 8, the Makati RTC granted CAP's petition for rehabilitation and ordered the implementation of the firm's revised recovery plan.

Makati RTC Judge Cesar Untalan also requested the Securities and Exchange Commission to give CAP a second chance at resuming its business.

He emphasized the need to give CAP another chance to re-establish itself for the good of its plan holders.

"It is really very difficult to develop and reconstruct, but it is very easy to destroy. Let us go rehabilitate CAP rather than liquidate," Untalan wrote.

However, CAP said it was still at a crossroad as the fate of its dealer's license, which was suspended by the Securities and Exchange Commission in 2004, remained uncertain.

"We need to see a proactive regulator. Pilosbeat a dealer's license, we still read up with a slow motion liquidation. The rehab plan will fail within a year of implementation without a dealer's license," CAP lead counsel Gilbert Reyes told the Inquirer.

CAP filed its petition for rehabilitation in August 2005 after it encountered difficulties in meeting its liabilities to plan holders. Today, it has about 400,000 plan holders.

The approval of CAP's revised rehabilitation is the latest development in the company's efforts to stay afloat.

ANALYSTS said the international-port operator has the "most convincing and coherent strategy."

ICTSI named best shipping firm in Asia

By Riza T. Olchondra

INTERNATIONAL CONTAINER TERMINAL Services Inc. (ICTSI) was named best among Asian transport and shipping companies in a survey by London-based business magazine Euromoney, beating big Chinese competitors China Ocean Shipping Co. and China Merchants Holdings.

In Euromoney's first Asian Companies Poll 2006, ICTSI was the top pick of Asia's leading market analysts in the transport and shipping industry category. Analysts said the international port operator had the "most convincing and coherent strategy."

For the study, Euromoney asked market analysts at leading banks and research institutes in Asia to nominate the top three companies in each of the countries or sectors they covered, basing it mind market strength, profitability, growth potential and quality management and earnings.

Points were then awarded on the scale of 4-3-2-1 for nominations for the first, second and third placers, respectively. The results are presented as a percentage of total points received in each category together with the number of companies that received points in each group.

ICTSI garnered 22.06 percent of the total survey points as compared to China Ocean Shipping's (Group) 20 percent and China Merchants Holdings' 11.43 percent.

BYTHE NU

Bataan power row takes on new twist

By Abigail L. Ho and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PHILIPPINE ORIENT PHILIPPINES Corp.'s refusal to provide electricity to the pro-to-be-decommissioned Bataan Polytechnic Corp. (BPC) petrochemical plant in Mariveles, part-owner Metro Alliance Holdings and Equities Corp. will be filing a case against the power firm with the Bataan Regional Trial Court.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Metro Alliance said

BATAAN, B1

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FAR EAST MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Bank offers word to the wise on wealth

'ABCs of Credit' for first-time card users

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

NEVER JUST A CREDIT CARD PAYMENT. Don't spend more than you earn. Borrow money prudently. Have a savings account. Stick to a budget.

There are just some of the financial advice that the Citibank group in the Philippines shares locally with Filipinos as part of its financial literacy campaign.

Citibank kicked off its campaign in 2004 when it opened its low credit card website...www.asiacreditwise.com.ph/citibank.com.ph – to help instill financial discipline among Filipinos who are only starting to use credit cards.

The website could not have come at a more opportune time, considering the growing concern of banking authorities at that time over the rising incidences of credit card fraud, which could be blamed partly on unscrupulous users of credit cards.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

The website – now in Filipino and Singlish – is packed with tips on the proper use of a credit card, showing that it is possible to make the credit card work for you and, at the same time, avoid being crushed under the weight of rising debt.

Citibank says, for instance, that if you pay your outstanding bill in full, you can enjoy an interest-free credit card for as long as 45 days.

If you don't have enough cash, then at least pay the minimum due to keep the account current. But when you can, pay more to avoid interest charges, set at about 3.5 percent a month.

Don't think of the credit card as an extra cash source, because it is not. Rather, think of it rather as just a convenient way of paying for your regular purchases, such as gasoline or groceries, or a tool to buy big-ticket items on installment, sometimes at no interest.

Mark C. Jones, country business manager of Citibank Philippines' Global Consumer Bank, said the business that investing in a financial literacy campaign was a natural extension of Citibank's business, which is to provide Filipinos the financial tools they need.

Raising the quality of life

Jones added that one fundamental financial discipline is ingrained in Filipinos, then they will get a handle bigger credit responsibilities as they acquire more property and have a car or a house.

"It makes sense for us to be involved in the community in a way that is related to our core business," Jones said.

Citibank, he said, sees financial education as being all about helping consumers, whether they be individuals or communities, small businesses or large institutions, even not-for-profit organizations, actively look after their money and their financial future.

"Strong financial education programs raise the quality of life for individuals, families and institutions, and strengthen communities around the world," Jones said. "We believe that when you have financial education and the freedom and information that comes with it, you can choose the lifestyle that works best for you and your family."

$280-million program

The Citibank campaign in the Philippines is part of a 10-year, $280-million program to promote financial literacy in countries where Citibank operates.

Promotions-wise, Citibank has widened its campaign to cover all facets of wealth management.

Its programs include:

• Basic Education Seminars for low to middle income microentrepreneurs to teach them the value of financial stewardship in partnership with ABS-CBN Bayan.

• Personal Finance Seminars for working mothers who are usually the budget managers in Filipino households...topics range from importance of financial planning, how to invest, to coach courses on entrepreneurship, together with Working Mom magazine;

• Production and sponsorship of personal finance books, including the Citibank Guide To Building Personal Wealth, Making More Money and Get Money Wise, and

• Lifestyle/Network television spots that promote financial planning among women. The campaign, dubbed Take Charge of Your Money, has four materials, each material addressing a certain age group—women in their 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s to 60s. Citibank hopes to reach out to women as well as men and show them why they need to take charge of their money so they can look forward to a right future.

ABCs of Credit

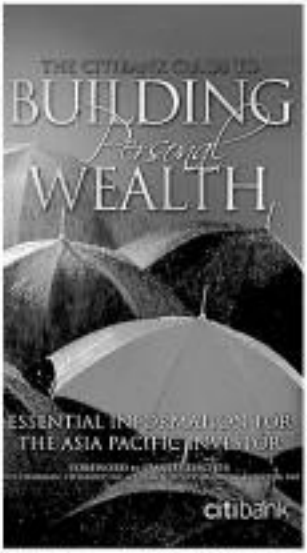
Its latest program which kicked off in time for Christmas is the "ABCs of Credit," targeting first-time credit card holders.

Targeting young professionals and first-time credit card holders, the campaign is timely given the upcoming holiday season and the rising number of card applications to the country, said Jess Tolentino, Citibank's cards business director.

"Having clear cost cards and signals they are ready to take charge of their finances," Tan said. "However, while it is an amazing time of change, many are unsure about 'best practices' when it comes to using credit cards. So, help them manage and spend responsibly, we (Citibank) have taken the initiative and developed and launched this ABC of Credit program.

"Real to make it attractive and easy to understand, we use 'touch-friendly' designs and transparent everyday payment examples," Tan added. "We want to reinforce that, while having credit cards signal independence, it is more important to be responsible and not end to spend within one means."

With these tips in mind, Citibank hopes that credit cards will become more of a friend to Filipinos, rather than an enemy.



CITIBANK has come up with the "Guide To Building Personal Wealth" to train Filipinos on the essentials of wealth management.

INQUIRER Badminton
Served fresh, monthly.
Available at all major badminton courts nationwide.

An exciting weekend awaits at Prestige Cars BMW on November 18 & 19, 2006.
• The Power 1 Vault - Test-drive a BMW and get a chance to unlock the Power 1 Vault containing the keys that could take BMW 1 home.
• Featured Models - Discover the elements of modern movement featuring the BMW 325i Coupe and the BMW Z4 3.0Si Coupe.
• Pacquiao Live - Catch the live feed of the Pacquiao-Morales match on November 19.

Binay, Boy Scouts backtrack

IT LOOKS LIKE THE BOSS OF the Boy Scouts president and his council is not enough to appease their upstart counterparts in the Girl Scouts.

The Boy Scouts president, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, wrote to revive the Girl Scouts membership in a dinner-talk after the latter published last week a full-page ad in the magazine blasting the Boy Scouts' efforts to revive old Girl Scouts again 13-37 and have them join their campaign and ambitions.

"We would like to assure you that we are not fighting the Girl Scouts-Manila would like to coexist," the normally tough-talking mayor pleaded, apparently on dual ears.

Despite the conciliatory tone of the Binay letter, saying Girl Scouts president Susan Lontoy and the rest of the council still were ahead in earlier signatures from BOGs and female leaders to ask Congress to stop Binay and the bill's passage.

As to the proposal to rename the Boy Scouts in favor Philippines to reflect the planned gender mix, "The details of the bill are not carved in stone and it can be the subject of dialogues ... with your consent, Mr. President," Binay added.

Unfortunately, the dinner-dialogue may have to wait as the new Girl Scouts president, Teresita Chua, is in the United States attending a boardmember's meeting and will not be back until next week.

In the meantime, the Girl Scouts are still mobilizing for a rally before Congress to show their opposition to the "Scouts" bill filed by Binay ally, Makati Rep. Agapito Aquino.

Tual Vivo: Thanx they go

THE HOUSE RULING Field of Tual Vivo Inc. (of, who's many a kid spent memorable weekends, is being closed down to give way to investment demand for hotel rooms.

According to the grapevine, the many St. hotel needs to increase the number of its rooms to at least 300 from the present 126 if it has to be taken seriously by the booming convention market in the region, especially China.

The architectural plans have already been finished for a two-level wing, which will be joined to the OLD are Below house-style main structure, to house the additional rooms.

With the closure of the landmark field, patrons who wish their kids a similar rite-of-passage experience are still take them to the government-run, and much larger public grounds in front of the Development Academy of the

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Weak dollar prompts RP firms to trim FCDU deposits

By Doris C. Dorias

Investors shift to peso-denominated instruments

REFLECTING THE PERSISTENT weakness in the dollar, some local investors are expected to continue pulling funds out of foreign currency deposit units (FCDU) time deposits, based on a Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas report.

On the contrary, peso-denominated assets have become more attractive even to foreign investors who do not want to accept that net interest rate yields had again turned negative against offshore benchmarks.

BSP posting week-on-week growths for three consecutive weeks, the BSP reported that banks' FCDU deposit liabilities dropped by $7.1 million to $17.44 billion as of Oct. 31. This was lower than the previous week's $17.46 billion but higher than the year-ago build-up of $15.26 billion.

The BSP reported that the situation was due to the "translation of time deposit accounts of certain corporations."

FCDUs, considered as the country's secondary layer of foreign exchange reserves, historically act as a natural hedge against the dollar's depreciation whenever the pesos on a translation basis.

Before net differentials between the Philippines' currency bill rates and those of US treasury notes and US Libor had turned negative going to the bigger drop in domestic interest rates relative to those foreign counterparts, the BSP reported.

Despite the negative yields, BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said foreign portfolio inflows were pouring into the country, unlike the situation last May when the negative differentials resulted in fund outflows.

Yet due to the much improved economic fundamentals, particularly the progress in fiscal consolidation and also helped by the benign global investment sentiment, Guinigundo said.

In May uncertainties on the movement in US interest rates made exchange rate movements on emerging markets like the Philippines. This spilled over to local borrowers, resulting in the massive withdraw by holders of yen investment trust funds.

The BSP report showed that in the case of the 182-day treasury bill rate and the US counterpart, the differential remained positive as the domestic rate was still slightly higher.

As of the last government auction on Nov. 6, the 182-day treasury bill fell to 5.26 percent from 5.771 percent. But of late, the yield was 4.2399 percent.

The BSP report showed that negative after-tax differential between the local treasury bill rate and those of US Treasuries and US Libor had widened.

Despite the negative rate yields, the BSP has expected a strong inflow of portfolio investments into local stocks, government securities and bank placements. But foreign portfolio inflows to the country further surged to $851.8 million in October from $373.5 million in September.

The strong influx of portfolio investments has allowed the BSP, the national government and private corporations to pay foreign debts ahead of maturity.

UNDP

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Contracting of a Manufacturer / Supplier to Supply and Construction of Test Facility for Light Sources and Luminaires (Goniophotometer with Rotating Mirror)
Philippine Efficient Lighting Market Transformation Project

The Development Support Services Center (DSSC) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would like to invite local and international manufacturers / suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and construction of test facility for light sources and luminaires (Goniophotometer with Rotating Mirror).

The project aims to address the barriers to widespread utilization of energy efficient lighting (EEL) systems in the Philippines. It will specifically focus on the promotion of energy efficient version of three fluorescent lamps, 27-w, high intensity discharge (HID) lamps, ballasts (low loss electromagnetic and electronic), and energy efficient luminaires.

Under the institutional and capacity building component of the project, one major laboratory test facility to be set up to the testing for performance testing of general lighting system (GLS) light sources and luminaires, including ballasts luminaires. The tested data results from the measurements to be performed by the facility will be used for the labeling program of the Philippine Government.

Bidding Documents (Requirements for Eligibility, Instructions to Bidders, Terms of Reference) and Standard Compliance of Contract may be obtained personally upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Philippine Peso Five Thousand (PHP 5,000.00) for local bidders or US Dollar One Hundred (USD 100.00) for international bidders, from the following address:

Development Support Services Center
United Nations Development Programme
20th Floor Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza
6819 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Tel. No. (632) 901 9270 / 901 9273
Fax No. (632) 901 9280 / 184 5650

International suppliers are encouraged to appoint and authorize Philippine-based counterparts to assist the bidding documents and submit proposals for and on their behalf.

The aforementioned Bidding Documents will be released to all interested parties strictly from November 15, 2006 to December 1, 2006 only. The Bidding Documents shall contain all instructions on the bidding procedures, bid opening, bid validity, and other requirements.

The pre-bid conference shall be conducted on December 5, 2006, 10:00 AM at the UNDP Office. All terms, conditions, specifications and related matters will be discussed during the pre-bid conference.

UNDP reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality therein, accept the bid and award the contract to the most advantageous offer to the UNDP based on UNDP criteria. UNDP assumes no obligation or responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses incurred or that may be incurred for the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made by the Contract.

(Sgd.) ETHELRED B. CAPUNO
Manager, DSSC

Makati court OKs rehab plan for CAP

Front page B4

first plan is also subject to certain conditions.

For one, the court has required stockholders with unpaid subscribed capital stock to remit their subscription payments not later than March 31, 2007.

The board of directors, stockholders and officers were also ordered to dispose and sell all of CAP's subsidiaries and affiliates not later than Dec. 31, 2008.

Shareholders were also prohibited from transferring, pledging of funds or assets from one subsidiary or affiliate to another during the rehabilitation period.

The court also ordered CAP's officers, directors and stockholders to at least for the recovery of whatever amount CAP has paid under a subscription agreement with Ed Ecuber Management Inc. not later than Dec. 31, 2007. They were likewise directed to give back to CAP whatever they may receive as honorariums, director's fee, and remuneration for their attendance to the board meetings of Bank of Commerce or any of CAP's more than 18 affiliates and subsidiaries.

The court also prescribed a schedule of payments to plan holders.

For traditional plan holders with 6 class claims for the period necessary of which over 2000 to 2007. Fees will be paid within six months from the date of the order, whichever period is equivalent to the estimated rates under the plan. The second tranche, besides for each amounts will be paid in two annual installments. Beginning 2011. On reduced tuition benefits per semester will be paid in full.

This holders with lapsed plans whether before or after the filing of the rehabilitation plan are not entitled to receive any benefit under their education plans. The court has given them two years to exercise their plans.

The termination values for plan holders with terminated plans will be paid over a five-year period from 2007, payable quarterly starting on the second quarter. Termination values are based on the contract, which is a percentage of the given contract price paid.

Tuition will be repaid for plan holders with claims for reimbursement for benefits paid before the second semester of SY 2006-2007. This will be based on the reduced rates in the rehabilitation plan and not on actual tuition paid by the plan holders. Payments will be in the same over a period of five years beginning 2007.

Plan holders who have fully received educational benefits and are entitled to a return of installments made equivalent to 100 percent of their gross contract price will be paid their due PHP in 2012.

For holders of fixed value plans, benefits will be paid in line with the terms of the contract with no deferment of payment or reduction of benefits.

There are holders on the other hand will be paid in line with the terms of the rehab plan.

As of this 2006, CAP has paid more than P11.5 billion in tuition, court records showed.

Cocktales

Front page B3

Philippines on the other side of the Tagaytay ridge.

No dogs and Filipinos allowed

THE PORTLAND Page 3A section of the New York Post ran the following item in its Monday edition: "Hotels failed service signs (think "Tainted Shadowcat!") have special instructions for her frequent visits to Cohen Hotel? Patrons on her chair...It says, "No Filipinos inside!" Explained our source, "She hates them."

Mosop-go-round

■ IN YET ANOTHER installment of the ratings war between ABS-CBN and GMA-7, GMA Marketing and Production president Menal Quingco has written advertisers and ad agencies to question the AGB Nielsen Media Research reports that show ABS-CBN on top of the June 19 programs ratings among cable TV viewers.

■ A FILIPINO-AMERICAN law firm in San Francisco, the Tinio Law Offices, has decided to set up a Manila office to challenge the dominance of white US lawyers providing immigration consultancy services in the country.

Heard through the grapevine

SEI will reportedly open a branch in Davao on 16 May—a call opening for SEP patrols and testers to subscribers for transactions...with no less than talent theory by Jr. and daughter Tessana and Elizabeth dying to be the investors.

(Email: cocktales@inquirer.net)

Profit-taking . . .

Front page B1

The broader all-share index fell 6.76 points to 1,726.83.

Losers outpaced gainers two-to-one as all sectors ended lower, with the exception of the property counter, which managed to gain P1.47 billion.

"The market is overbought, so it's not surprising to see investors taking profits even if the overall sentiment remains bullish," said Ron Rodrigo of Enterprise Securities.

Top-traded PLDT fell P70 to P2,450 while Globe Telecom retreated P35 to P1,390. SM Investments extended its rally, gaining another P12.50 to a record high of P516.

Philex Mining edged up 10 centavos to P4.56 after the company declared a cash dividend. **BW**

DTI moves to hasten firms' registration

By Ronand N. Dantiago

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE and Industry has set up two more business registration satellite offices in Pasig and Mandaluyong cities to make it easier for entrepreneurs to put up a business.

According to DTI's National Capital Region group, its new satellite office at the ground floor of the Pasig Business Center at the Pasig City Hall Complex (Pasig will operate every Wednesday starting Nov. 22).

The satellite office in Mandaluyong, on the other hand, will serve business owners every Friday starting Nov. 24 at the ground floor of the Mandaluyong Business Center Annex.

Trade Assistant Secretary Ma. Theresa L. Pelayo, who is in charge of regional operations, urged business owners to take advantage of their convenience to save their time, effort and money.

DTI-NCR's other satellite business registration centers are at the ground floor of Manila City Hall (Mondays and Wednesdays, 8 a.m.-12 n.n.); ground floor of the Las Piñas-Bamboo Clock Drop Shop Center (Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.); second floor of the Marikina City Hall (Thursdays, 8 a.m.-12 p.m.), second floor of Godofg Tower South (the Quezon City Post Office Building on Thursday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. and 8 a.m-12 n.n. on Fridays), and the third floor of the Valenzuela Commerce Center (Monday to Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.).

Bill exempting senior citizens from VAT filed

By Michelle V. Reyes

THE COUNTRY'S SENIOR CITIzens will be spared from paying value added taxes if Capiz Rep. Fredenil Castro were to have his way.

Castro filed House Bill No. 5789, which seeks to exempt senior citizens from the 12-percent VAT for them to fully enjoy their 20-percent discount on goods and services.

At effect, senior citizens only enjoy an 8-percent discount because they have to pay VAT.

The 20-percent discount provided by Republic Act No. 9257 covers purchase of goods or services from hotels and other lodging houses, funeral parlors, hospitals and dental clinics, theaters, concert halls, circuses and carnivals.

The discount also covers transport fares.

To encourage private enterprises to employ senior citizens, the law likewise allows businesses to deduct from their taxable income 15 percent of what they spent on salaries for the elderly.

The law has been in effect since 2005, but some establishments have only complied with the law starting early this year because of the delayed issuance of the implementing rules.

Revenue Regulation No. 4-2006 was only issued in February.

The revenue regulation states that the discounts granted by an establishment to senior citizens will be considered as allowable deductions in the gross income of the business.

This will ensure the establishment to pay a lower income tax, and thus compensate for the lost revenues due to the discounts.

Bataan power . . .

From page B1

...a would-be seeking damages from Mirant for allegedly "misspending the efforts" to revive the power plants subject by refusing to come out to provide a contract power supply to the plant.

Although committed to pursue the case, Metro Alliance also expressed willingness to enter into an "amicable settlement and/or compromise agreement" with Mirant.

Mirant, however, said that as a subsidiary of a US-based corporation, it was banned from dealing with State-sanctioned institutions.

Metro Alliance holds a 40-percent interest in SPC Mirant Corp., which owns the Bataan power-electrical plant, through Polpower Holdings Inc. The remaining 60-percent stake is held by companies led by National Power International Co., an international affiliate.

Mirant said its subsidiaries, including Mirant Philippines, are restricted by American law from engaging in or facilitating commercial transactions involving companies associated with Iran," the independent power producer said in a statement.

"In particular, Mirant and its subsidiaries are prohibited from entering into contracts with or for the benefit of the government of Iran and entities controlled by it, subject to the risk of significant financial and jail terms," it added.

The company said its refusal to provide electricity to the Bataan petrochemical plant was not being undertaken either as providing "direct or indirect" assistance to Iranian entities, "wherever located, was strictly prohibited by US law."

At this point, Mirant said it had no choice but to comply with the US law or it could lose its access to American company. Also, invoking that particular law would expose "economic sanctions" on its Atlanta-based parent.

Since last year, Metro Alliance and its foreign investor have been rebuffing the other. It recently engaged the expertise of the assistance of an international supply of power.

Metro Alliance had claimed that Mirant's refusal to cooperate was a clear violation of the electric power purchase agreement dated Dec. 28, 1999.

ICTSI . . .

From page B1

Ramonsang has noted that the companies topping the 2006 list's best managed companies are exceptions to companies that have faced significant business challenges in order to prosper across the business cycle and consistently produce solid returns. It added that the same companies were "those that sets out in the end and are most likely to provide investors long-term returns for shareholders."

Ramonsang explained that the success of Asia's best managed companies come from, among others, having "enlightened management teams that have adopted clear business strategies (update to their companies' particular circumstances, and markets" and the ability to execute those strategies efficiently.

ICTSI's latest accolade was in addition to the company's long string of global recognitions given for leading international business groups and publications.

In 2005, Ramonsang also listed ICTSI as the best among Philippine companies for operating efficiency, most improved financial management and most improved website, as selected by Deutsche Bank as the "first related port operator in Asia."

ICTSI is a leading global port operator managing 30 container terminals in seven countries.

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Strong peso lifts conglomerates' income in Q3

Gokongwei, Lopez groups report growth across sectors

By Elisabeth L. Sanchez

MAJOR CONGLOMERATES WERE all a sharp growth in third quarter earnings due to gains from a stronger peso.

JG Summit Holdings Inc. of the Gokongwei group recorded a net income of P3.94 billion for the third quarter ending September, a 147 percent increase from P743 million last year due to foreign exchange gains of its subsidiaries on the back of a stronger peso.

Its nine-month net income also recorded a sharp increase by 320.4 percent to P8.91 billion from P2.44 billion in the same period last year, due largely to gains from the sale of some of its shares in Universal Robina Corp. last February 2006.

The sale brought about the decision of the company's equity to remove to SEC on 59 percent this year from 66 percent last year.

Recurring net income grew 4.9 percent from P2.27 billion to P2.38 billion year-on-year.

Consolidated revenues were up 22.6 percent from P46.66 billion to P80.15 billion during the nine-period.

The substantial growth was driven by the continued improvement in sales and revenues of almost all core businesses, except for the telecommunications business, which declined by 7 percent during the nine-month period this year.

Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc. (Digitel) registered consolidated revenues of P7.4 billion for the nine months ended Sept. 30, an improvement from last year's revenues amounting to P6.47 billion.

The win due to a foreign exchange gain of P1.7 billion reported during the third quarter, which more than offsetted up by the decline in service revenues both in the wireline and wireless businesses.

Digitel booked a consolidated loss before tax of P324.9 million during the nine-month period from P1.77 billion in the same period in 2005.

Benpres Holdings Corp. (Benpres), of the Lopez group, meanwhile, said its net income from January to September reached P2.98 billion, up from P699 million in the same period last year.

Benpres' net income includes P888 million in foreign exchange gains resulting from the peso's strengthening to 50.21 to 1 dollar.

Unaudited consolidated revenues rose P32.9 billion in the first nine months of 2006, 2 percent higher than P32.725 billion in 2005.

Benpres' affiliate First Philippine Holdings Corp., meanwhile, reported P6.2 billion in net income in the first three quarters of 2006, up 45 percent from P4.2 billion in the same period last year.

This was primarily due to the improvement in earnings of subsidiaries mainly First Gen Corp. and First PhilSpirse Industrial Development Corp.

Revenue from the sale of electricity is expected for 80 percent of consolidated revenues.

Foreign buying of stocks up 149% as of October

By Elisabeth L. Sanchez

NET FOREIGN BUYING IN THE stock market surged 149 percent to P114 billion as of October from P218 billion in the same month last year, propped up by increasing confidence in the country's economic outlook, Philippine Stock Exchange president Wanda Lim said in a statement.

Net foreign buying is the difference between the sales and purchases of stocks of foreign investors.

The PSE said total foreign buying from January to October this year rose 44.4 percent to P275.4 billion from P162.9 billion in the same period last year.

This compared the 16.2 percent increase in foreign selling to P210.75 billion from its year-ago level.

During the first 10 months of the year, the PSEi closed at 2,768.5 points, 612.5 points or 29.2 percent higher than its 2,096.0 level at the end of 2005.

"It is worth noting that, in the first year, the PSEi Tot advanced at a rate that is more than twice faster than its 15-percent growth rate in 2005," Lim said.

"This means that the surge in stock prices is accelerating, and that speaks a lot about investors' confidence on the country's economic prospects."

Meanwhile, the index shot 20 points to 2,891.76 after touching record highs the past week.

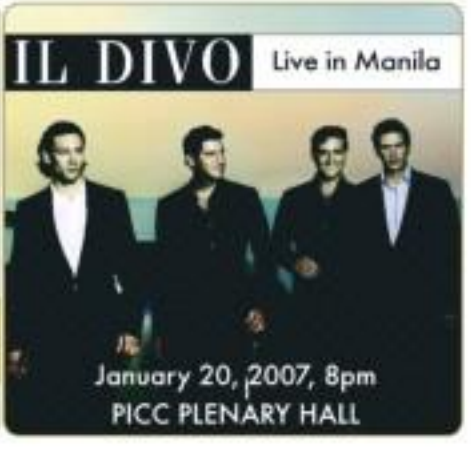
Value turnover for the first 10 months of the year expanded 30.6 percent to P607.20 billion from P541 billion a year ago.

Average daily value turnover also expanded by 30 percent to P2.15 billion from P1.65 billion for the same period last year.

Total market capitalization of all listed stocks surged by almost 32 percent, or from P5.95 trillion at the end of 2005 to P9.84 trillion as of October 2006.

Domestic capitalization of all listed firms went up by 37.36 percent to P2.99 billion from P2.18 billion.

During the same 10-month period, the prices of 177 issues went up, those of 32 others remained, while that of 20 issues were unchanged compared to their levels at the end of 2006.



BUSINESS

T-bonds hit all-time low of 6.2%

Authorities urge commercial banks to step up lending activities

BSP governor Rafael Buenaventura

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT'S 10-YEAR TREASURY bonds dropped to all-time low of 6.25 percent yesterday, as highly liquid banks swamped the auction and threw huge volume of bids for the long-term debt instruments.

"This is the lowest rate ever," said Treasurer Undersecretary Gil Beltran in a press briefing after the auction. "This is what peacetime positive results."

The new rate for the 10-year government security was 207.5 basis points lower than the 8.625 percent recorded in the previous auction last Sept. 7. (100 basis points is equivalent to one percentage point).

Salmon said the substantial drop in the rate of the 10-year bonds was partly attributed to the huge cash available in the system. The high level of liquidity among banks is partly attributed to the growth in remittances from overseas Filipino workers, whose families deposit part of the income in bank savings.

Bids for the 1.5-year bonds amounted to P12,305 billion, more than double the government's debt offering of only P6 billion.

The Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee accepted P6 billion worth of bids, thus raising in full the borrowing schedule.

The Treasury official said that with the improving fiscal condition, the government's borrowing requirement is starting to decline. Fiscal authorities are now urging banks to increase lending.

In the first nine months of the year, the government's budget deficit hit only P58.43 billion, much lower than the P121.9-billion ceiling officially set for January to September. Also, the government is expected to post a full-year budget deficit of less than the 300B ceiling of P125 billion.

Bankers noted that banks have already stepped up their lending activities, as growth in lending stood at 6.3 percent year-on-year in September.

The growth figure, however, still paled in comparison to the 30-percent growth recorded prior to the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

Meralco to issue corporate notes worth P12B

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LOPEZ-LED MANILA ELECTRIC CO. will be issuing P12 billion worth of corporate notes in not more than 15 qualified institutional lenders next month.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Meralco first vice president and treasurer Rafael Seifreda said it had engaged an underwriting agreements with BDO Capital and Investment Corp., BPI Capital Corp., China Banking Corp., Development Bank of the Philippines, FG Capital Corp., and PNB Capital and Investment Corp. for the notes issue to be conducted on Dec. 14.

"The notes shall be a seven-year facility and is intended to refinance existing loans obligations and fund working capital requirements," Seifreda said.

In an earlier interview, Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco said the distribution utility would likely fully tap capital expenditure budget by P20B and then, on up to P30Oo million, next year.

The capex increase, Francisco said, would depend on whether its creditors would allow Meralco to do so.

For the past two years, creditor covenants have prevented Meralco from going beyond the P1.75-billion annual capex ceiling. This has led to the shelving of some vital capital projects, including the improvement of electric systems throughout its franchise area.

But since Meralco had been prepaying its commercial loans and had even tapped its P30-million loans to the Asian Development Bank last June, Francisco said it had acquired some leeway to hike its capex.

The additional P250 million to P300 million in additional capex would come from Meralco's cash flow and would fund vital projects, he said.

Chief of these projects was Meralco's planned Star Stradhaler substation, Francisco said, which was delayed due to capex constraints.

With electronic payments, cut in red tape seen

By Reena F.W. Domingo

GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO EARLIER corruption and red tape in line agencies are given a boost as guidelines that renew electronic payments for government transactions take effect today, Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said.

Favila said he had signed with Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves on Oct. 20 the guidelines for the electronic payment and collection system.

"The guidelines will minimize face-to-face interaction in payment transaction, reducing corruption and red tape in the workplace and making it easier for citizens, businessmen, and investors to transact with government at any time and place," Favila said.

The official added that electronic capabilities would make payment and collection services quicker and more effective as this would make it easier to monitor payments.

The guidelines are spelled out in Joint Department Administrative Order No. 02, which prescribes the rules that implement Republic Act No. 8792, or the law on EPCS in the government.

The order allows electronic payments through credit cards, automated teller machines or ATMs, debit cards, stored-value cards, mobile wallet payments and kiosks, among others.

"The guidelines will apply to all government offices that currently use or intend to use EPCS to collect fees, charges, assessment and revenues," Favila said.

The order also creates a government electronic payment and collection system evaluation team composed of representatives from the Department of Finance, Department of Trade and Industry, Bureau of the Treasury, National Computer Center and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

"EPCS enabled more government agencies to implement end-to-end e-commerce transactions and is a concrete step towards bolstering our global competitiveness," Favila said.

MOTORING

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Editor: Cesar D. Mangosing

3 PINOYS IN GREECE

Driving in luxury, driven by necessity

By Tessa R. Salazar

ATHENS—TALK ABOUT sitting in the lap of luxury—and taking it with them wherever they drive.

Filipino drivers wowing their ways this side of the world do seem to enjoy the lives of their would-be-employers. Just ending what they're driving along the streets of Athens would make any car enthusiast's heads tremble with adrenaline.

But is this really that big a deal for Filipino drivers donning wealthy Hellenes to and from their everyday routines?

This foreman/blowing writer, on an assignment in Greece upon the invitation of Hellenic luxury car giant BMW for us to see unhurried event, snuck out for a while from the corporate contingent and went around the city to find that out for herself.

A 'keeper' of an employer

It ain't hard to spot a Filipino driver in Greece. In fact, it didn't take long before she chanced upon 40-year-old Michael Stopcor, whose last 27 years have been spent as a driver here.

Michael drives numerous cars for his rich Arab-Muslim employer. So today you might see him driving around town in an eight-cylinder Rolls Royce (one among four Rolls Royces his employer's), the next day you'll see him in a Bentley Limousine. The same other days, he'll be behind the wheel of a Mercedes-Benz S500, a BMW 745i, a Lexus GS400 royalty limousine, or a 5.7-liter V8-long Grand Cherokee.

And at the end of the day he gets to park all of these in his employer's palace.

Once he steps out of these luxury cars, however, reality sinks in. His monthly salary, at around 1,000 euros (P80,000), may look impressive—but he is quick to admit that that amount is just enough to pay the rent, the bills, and the tuition for his child.

And, just like any other driver, when Michael gets stuck in heavy rain/snow traffic, there's pretty much nothing he could do but watch his employer's car would able to fly through or change shape, walk on walls—whatever—so the poor guy on those cars would really be stuck in it.

Despite this, Michael still enjoys driving after all these years. He particularly likes the Lexus line and the Bimmer 745i, though he finds the latter a bit more complicated to drive.

But the vehicle he likes driving the most is the Grand Cherokee. Why? Simply for the reason that his employer lets him take it home every day and park it there overnight.

Michael screams with pride the day he acquired his European driver's license in 1992. At that time, he recalls, there were here only about 10 among the less of thousands of Filipinos in Greece who had such a license.

He can be considered one of the lucky few who landed a "keeper" for an

Another episode of what if

WE MUST ADMIT, LADIES AND GENtlemen, that we are a relatively lucky bunch of consumers. Despite being in a small sales volume market, we are not severely lacking in choices. The Philippines, the third world paradise that it unwisely is, has a decent cross-section of motoring categories and models. From mini-cars to luxury saloons to small turbo pickups, we practically have it all these days. Hell, almost everything.

It is very possible that the the first time in my short 20-year automotive memory, most motoring is left can be satisfied by visiting an established dealership's showroom. If you want push, plebeian or panic performance, all you need is a loan, no cash down and your purchase.

The lack of catchphrase not to up those of us who live, breathe and run cars. It would be fair to say that we enjoy our chance to dream of the useful and necessary that we are routinely told can't. Out of these stories to, most of us drive wide awake, both eyes open, often at the most ill opportune times. If your co-workers or, worse yet, your boss has had to nail your notorious hunk to the over-used budget wood to become one more drowning of suffering such an internal combustion engine, then you are part of our little fraternal bus-

MY DRIFT

Andre Palmer

Fantasizing

Welcome to brotherhood of the petrol head, women are most welcome and treated fairly but paid in hours of work and sleep lost. Interesting of anything and everything under the automotive sun. I too guilty of such lackadaisical behavior, but here, I have an excuse to spend hours upon hours thinking and pining after cars.

Under the guise of a morning back, I had my parents and solely my needs. Lucky me, most nights too, but all one has to do is remember being a kid in a candy shop, with only a quarter to enjoy pocket, wondering how they'd pay for the present and a half of lockdown they'd control to the counter. How money will assess the hands but one way of the wheeled world, with one never having enough to fulfill everything one's hand desires.

So what's been keeping me awake these days? What flights of automotive fancy have been flowering around in my petrol pickled grey matter? Just me to my dilettante likes and judge for yourself if I need professional help.

My mind has been out to pony track, but one that leads from Denver and finds us then and fast rather than cars and vague cabin. I want a Mustang and the car that likes McQueen down in the cemetery. Better you mind that I am an unapologetic car donor classic. Unlike "I drive the V8 but the smaller V6 will do fine for starters, as complete cute success and go fast parts can be had readily from the hard tuners and suppliers nationwide. A renovation will likely have to take place, but this is a project I want to complete in the finest garage, across consuming and impeccable in that may sound, it is just something I want to experience around. Why do you have to pay someone to experience the joy of banging this car back to speed and spec?

Continue to dream

The method of adding a pony to my stable is admittedly next blind since nine levels already, mainly because of the mind curdling experience of flowing the V8. Letting the exhaust note's unicorn rumble a phrase my ride stage is one of the most soul quieting experiences you can have.

I will have my Mustang sure of these days. The question of when that will happen is really a predicament of putting together the time much to the incentives. I will continue to dream, wide awake, through bored meetings and most everything that I'm supposed to be doing as of the moment. My boss should understand, but if he doesn't, then at least I've politely made my case already.

Driving in luxury, driven by necessity

employees. That means, Michael has been with the same employer all these 17 years. He right out of a driving school in Manila in 1989, the Cagayan Valley native credits his father for performing him to work in Greece.

For months, if Michael gets to move around town in all those flashy cars, can the woman be sad by himself?

By the way, his wife Imelda works for one of the wealthiest employers in Athens. They 16-year-old child lives with them and studies in a Greek school.

Well, that should put all those naughty thoughts to rest.

Juggling cars, finances

How does one drive to transport up to five luxury vehicles from the Greek mainland to a customer island in one time? Ask Mario Villanueva, driver of a shipping company whose island hopping cruises could come across with him to be a seemingly impossible thrill.

That's just how his long tenure comes around, Mario laughs heartily. You can't take it literally, of course.

But you have to commit to the task seriously, especially if the island transfers involve a Range Rover, a Mercedes-Benz E200, an SR GLK 200 Kompressor, or a Jeep Cherokee.

Mario's busiest time of the year is at cruises. He remarks that this is the time when everyone—the boss included—wants to flock out of Athens.

Mario usually brings his boss' Range Rover to the vehicle of choice during the month-long island hopping excursion. Then, in the boss comes the time-to-land characters on his personal yacht. Mario is sometimes left in Egean and how to bring in four vehicles onto the ferry boats—and bring that for and the ferry even can't host.

Flexibility

A driver in Greece for 11 years, Mario proudly shows his European license. He drives around in the Jeep Wrangler his boss' company around in him. He observes that Greeks are quite strict when following the rules of the road, and that they could be "very assertive" with their right of way.

He states "Filipinos" with a smirk, while his wife Imelda, who works for the same employer, nods in unison. Their house, a couple of kilometers away from their place of work, is being paid for by the employer for 300-square meter.

The man who has to figure out how to juggle four vehicles in and out of a busy boat also has to figure out how to make both ends meet for his three children. Mario says his salary and that of his wife go solely to the needs of their children.

"It's our responsibility to make them finish schooling. The kids have never been to Greece yet, because we would rather save the money for their tuition fees than spend it on vacation here."

The Villanueva couple, however, does get to visit their children in the Philippines every year.

Mario admits that he only learned to drive in Greece. This has proved disadvantageous during his trips to the metro land. "In my experience, I am more comfortable driving here. In the Philippines, I will get lost."

Not surprisingly, Mario says he doesn't have any "dream cars" anymore. Asked about in his open boat, Mario quips he would rather buy his own house.

Envoys' driver

For Roy Olmedo, "driver diplomacy" is the way to go.

BMW of the luxury cars BMW 740

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THE 2007 Subaru Outback 3.0R

Subaru's 2007 Outback and Legacy now in RP

THE 2007 OUTBACK 3.0R, together with the Legacy 2.0R, is now in the Philippines.

The Outback has been equipped with more features including the Subaru Intelligent Drive System (SI-DRIVE) that allows the driver to select from three different driving modes with a simple flick of the switch.

The 2007 Legacy 2.0R features more attractive and powerful engine control and is available in two variants—a sports model and a luxury model.

The Outback has long defined the "Crossover" genre with the unique combination of the driving performance of a luxury sedan and the versatility of an SUV.

The Outback 3.0R features the H-DRIVE which allows for easy conversion to any of three levels of engine performance at the flick of a switch and gives the driver the luxury choosing the driving styles ranging from "fuel efficient" to "dynamic sports." This new technology perfectly complements full-time, Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive configuration.

The 2007 Outback and Legacy models are on display at the Subaru dealer in Greenhills, Edsa. Test drive units are available to enable customers experience firsthand the superior driving performance and reliability features demonstrated GMC technology promises to deliver.

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NISSAN

2006 Kia Sportage, value leader

THE 2006 SPORTAGE is bigger than the average compact SUV.

PHOTOS FOR BUSINESSWORLD

THOSE OF YOU WHO REMEMBER THE first generation Kia Sportage (now probably scattered with its 1993 predecessor) were in truth, rarely found both on home roads or past safety vehicle with a weak engine, dicey interior and quality problems. No wonder Kia scrapped marketing it after the 2002 model year.

In 2005, Kia revived the Sportage as a full-bodied utility. Largely based on a recent car-like unibody platform. The all-new Sportage shares nothing with its predecessor and is related to the Hyundai Tucson (Hyundai Motor Co., if you don't know it yet, owns a third of Kia).

Objective

Kia revamped the Sportage with the objective of combining the smooth ride, easy handling and refinement of a passenger car, the style and driving position of an SUV and the interior room of a wagon in one versatile package. In a manner of speaking, Kia has largely succeeded in meeting this objective.

Longer (4,200 mm L vs(d)4 (2,800 mm) and taller (1,690 mm) than the average compact SUV, the Sportage is propelled by a 2.0-liter, twin cam, 16-valve engine with CVVT (Continuous Variable Valve Timing) mated to a 4-speed automatic transmission with 30ish-mm instrumental shift control. Its power is rated at 142 ps (4,000 rpm) and 186 n-m/at 18.0 kg m (4,500 rpm). This is a front-wheel-drive or 4x2 vehicle, not a 4x4.

Options

In the United States, a 2.7-liter V6 engine pitted bring 173 hp (6,000 rpm) and 4WD are available options for the Sportage. Unfortunately, these options are not offered here by Columbian Autocar Corp. I imagine it would be absolutely exhilarating to drive the Sportage when it is powered by a V6 engine.

As for the other hand, a bigger engine and 4WD would push up the SRP (suggested retail price) of the Sportage, which at the outset P600,000 is a bargain. But that price, you get a well-appointed compact SUV somewhat adequate if somewhat lackluster build quality and fit and finish as good as the Honda CR-V or the Toyota RAV4, a stylish and economic exterior (other than Pinocchio-like Pharaoh-sized cup holders), and loads and loads of interior room (including and the convenience features of a price class).

Keyless entry

Conveniences such as keyless entry with door, illuminated ignition keyhole, overhead sunglass case, a AV, 6(6.5)M cassette, CD MP3 with four speakers, steering-wheel mounted audio controls, three-zone automatic climate control, leather and fabric seats, rear glass opening (like the Honda CR-V and Hyundai Tucson), six cupholders, roof rails, roller cargo cover, power mirrors (inside mirror can fold right in), 60-CDs, center fascia with accessory outlet and 60/40 rear seat with center armrest and rear back levels.

Without removing the headrests, you can fold flat the split-folding rear seats to create a level cargo floor with 67 cubic feet load capacity. The Sportage can tow up to 2,500 K by the way.

A STYLISH and functional interior.

On the Road

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

Shortcomings

Of course, it has its shortcomings. While the 4-cylinder gasoline engine may be fuel-efficient, it is underpowered for an SUV of this size. Compared to its competitors, the Sportage is down on power and therefore refinement. The engine gets noisy at higher speeds and rev-ranging swinging acceleration is moderate. The Sportage's automatic tranny is not quite as smooth as the CR-V's or the RAV4's. On streets, the Sportage loses a bit as it is a tall vehicle without stability control.

Another thing the Sportage barely gets a passing mark because it has no airbags at all, though it has four-wheel-disc brakes, ABS and fog lamps as standard equipment. The US version has six airbags, ABS, stability control and a tire-pressure system.

Lower SRP

But then again, adding all those safety features to the standard Sportage package would have resulted in a much higher SRP. As it is, the Sportage's SRP at P1,685,000 is on par or with the Honda CR-V 2.4 liter, P150,000 less than the Ford Escape 2.3; P171,000 cheaper than the Hyundai X-Trail 2.0; and P149,000 lower than the Mazda Tribute 3.0. All these competitors, like the Sportage, are 2WD and have automatic transmissions.

THE STANDARD engine is 2.0-liter DOHC 16-valve/work CVVT.

Bottom line, the Kia Sportage deserves its showcasings, is a value leader in the compact SUV category.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Just when you think you've seen the ist race, along comes kinder one.

* * *

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See posters for complete details.

'Ur Van, Ur Business' . . .

From page B3-4

"Since their sales businesses have grown, they are also preparing to purchase the Nissan Urvan to support their growing business. With this project, we continue to cater full to do with those whom we've shared the blessings with," Lee said.

Expected success

EVDS has gotten an overwhelmingly positive response from its patrons and clients.

Said Lee: "The interesting key here is people's willingness and eagerness to work to support fellow-men's livelihood. This gives me and our country much hope. The opportunities are there. We just need to work on helping these get over the first hurdle. That's why we continue to work with government agencies and like private sector to help bridge the gap and make it for easier and accessible for more to participate in the program which results in a long-term, win-win situation for all parties involved."

EVDS has also banked up the Metro Economic zones as a fast-moving consumer items (FMCG) were selling (before). The introduction of the program has been instrumental in an unexpected level. Dealers have been crucial and its top supporters of UNAB since the success of the program means their success as well.

Dynamic, forward-looking

Despite the success of the current UNAB model, UMC is continually looking for ways to improve it. Lee shared that customers have been freely volunteering suggestions on how to better expand the program. The response has been so enthusiastic and so go-on all hours that Lee has to constantly jot down ideas so that she doesn't miss anything.

"It is truly a blessing. Now, we have to up-proactively support on the program to serve the needs of our expanded customer base for includes individual customers and consumers willing to support their employees to get into the program. We may not be able to solve them all today but we sure are working hard to do so," she said.

Future programs can be expected to help would-be start-up entrepreneurs as well as those who have already purchased the Urvan under the EVDS program to enhance their existing business, as well. EVDS, it is will be an-other first in the industry, and UMC is very excited about the new stages of the program's evolution.

Bandwagon effect

UMC's pioneering success has not been lost on its competitors. Some have already jumped on and launched similar programs, hoping to catch up with the phenomenal accomplishments of EVDS. Lee is not fazed at all by this development, if anything, she welcomes it.

"This only validates the success of the program and that the basic, underlying principle works. Helping others help themselves results in a larger benefit to the society as a whole. We helped in the first place. We would most like to see more others to later emulate programs that can result in the get benefit to all customers. If our program has created a bandwagon effect, all the better. Growing a positive, relevant influence can only be rewarded with additional success for all involved," she said.

NISSAN Urvan

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THE 2007 CROSSWIND Sportivo (in Blizzard Grey) now carries a sportier front fascia, new set of wheels and a first-leading rear-mounted camera.

New AUV improves chances of avoiding backing accidents

By Charles E. Buban

WE ALL DO IT SEVERAL TIMES a day we put our vehicle in reverse and back up. Sadly, this is when a disproportionate number of collisions take place.

"Surely, the very of us think about the dangers involved. We know there is no one behind our vehicle that we cannot see, but few of us have any idea how large that blind zone is or how dangerous are the consequences if ignored. To raise the safety margin, Isuzu Philippines Corp. decided to equip its 2007 Crosswind Sportivo with a rear-mounted camera," announced Jimmy Sired, public relations manager of Isuzu Philippines Corp.

The Sportivo is the highest variant among Isuzu's Crosswind lineup.

Located under the rear spoiler, the rear-mounted camera makes the latest Crosswind Sportivo the first Asian sc10e vehicle in the market to have this data-heading safety feature.

Images from the rear-mounted camera is sent to a three-inch LCD monitor in new JVC entertainment head-unit installed on the dashboard.

Indispensable tool

With five-and-above offered in upscale vehicle models, Sired explained the rear-mounted camera is an indispensable tool for seeing into a garage without turning into the back-wall (without the need to get off the vehicle), during tight space maneuvering and more importantly in checking if there are small children, pets, or unsuspecting pedestrians who might get hurt while backing up.

"It runs: rear mirror or 'beeping' backup signals are helpful but nothing beats seeing a live video of the real-view right in front of you. And despite the significant safety upgrade, the 2007 Crosswind Sportivo is still priced competitively. The automatic variant sells at P1.126 million while the manual at P1.078 million," said IPC public relations supervisor Ronald Bulahol.

But the backing camera is just among the many changes that IPC gave to its newest Crossover/Sportivo.

Restyled

To differentiate the latest Crossover/Sportivo from the previous models, IPC restyled its front fascia with a sportier front grille as well as equipped it with a newly designed fog lamps to add driver visibility during night-time driving as well as a new 16-inch high-gloss chrome wheels and luxurious titanium finishes for the seats.

The Crossover has retained the company's proven and fuel-efficient 2.5-liter 4JA1 direct injection turbo diesel engine (Euro 2-compliant).

Bulahol informed that the rest of the 2007 Crossover lineup will also carry the Sportivo's latest grille design and engine make. The XEV (automatic) variant is priced at P1.028 million, XEV (manual) at P979,000 and the new ES and the S1 (both manual), sell at P899,000 and P845,000, respectively.

"IPC has added a new variant to the lineup—the Crossover ES—which sits in between the XEV and the S2," said Bulahol who added that the warranty for all the 2007 Crossover lineup is extended for up to three years or 100,000 kilometers (whichever comes first)...

'Ur Van, Ur Business' succeeds at doing good

EARLY THIS YEAR UNIVERSAL Motor Corp. launched its newest tie-up program dubbed "Ur Van, Ur Business" to help people help themselves by becoming entrepreneurs, showing them how easy options using the Nissan Urvan to supplement their current income.

"This self-liquidating enterprise includes using the Urvan for a shuttle business or any type of towing or mobile service that uses the Urvan in its many incarnations, be it as a carpool, cargo van, rental van, or ambulance. The Urvan is even the most popular choice since it seats 20 passengers.

"One of my philosophies is to give value first, and I've learned that when you do, most likely the returns far exceed what you've given out in the first place. This new -the concept from which the UVUB program came about," said Elizabeth H. Lee, senior vice president for marketing of UMC.

Maximizing social impact

To maximize UVUB's social contribution, UMC committed to donate to the Center for Community Transformation Credit Cooperative (CCT) P1,000.00 for every Nissan Urvan sold under the program. It is through this partnership that UMC administers its role as a responsible corporate citizen, according to Lee. CCT is a micro-finance program that primarily reaches out to poorest of the poor, giving them the opportunity to become micro-entrepreneurs, survive workfirst and economic troubles, helping families break the devastating cycle of poverty.

"In the end, all of us, with every buyer of a Nissan Urvan under the UVUB program, will have a part in helping those who need needed help," Lee said.

She added that the program is already bearing fruits, regardless of the fact that it has been barely a year since its launch. Some beneficiary families have already become employers of other people in need.

24/7 LIFESTYLE
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso Chief of Correspondents Pam Pastor

IN THIS ISSUE
Diary of Pinay flight attendant in Seoul /D1

Korea fever, *Part one*

Many people have gone crazy over Korea, from their food and their music to their TV shows and movies

It seems Koreans are crazy about the Philippines, too. According to the Department of Tourism, last year, we had almost 500,000 visitor arrivals from Korea. There isn't a single doubt in our minds that the number is even bigger this year. Korea fever is something we can no longer ignore. Jeclaco in this two-week special, we give you a big dose of Korean pop culture and share with you stories of Koreans in the Philippines and Filipinos in Korea. And if you're dreaming of going to Korea but can't spring for plane tickets, don't fret. You can have a real Korean experience in your own backyard

Enjoy Korea without flying *(Part one)*

Yes, you can have your own authentic Korean experience without packing your bags. Let Mr. Johnny Park tell you how

By Zoe Castro
24/7 Contributor
and Pam Pastor

IF KOREAN FEVER HAS hit you in any way, chances are, you've been dreaming of having your own Korean adventure.

We have good news for you. Thanks to the Korean community that just seems to keep growing and growing in our country, you don't need to pack your bags and fly to have an authentic Korean experience.

In our desire to prepare a guide for you (think of it as a map of sorts), we decided to go on our own tour of Little Korea. But we didn't just want to run to and eat at Korean stores and restaurants that have sprung up all over the country. We needed guidance. We needed an expert.

Our friends at the Department of Tourism pointed us toward Mr. Johnny Park. Mr. Johnny, a Korean businessman who has lived in the Philippines for 15 years, has always been passionate about bridging the gap between Filipinos and Koreans. Despite being busy with his business, he has devoted his time to teaching Filipinos about Korean language and culture. ...Ben is enrolled students of the University of Santo Tomas, and three employees of the DOT.

"I talk them to teach me about the Filipino language and culture, too. I learn from them, they learn from me. It's an exchange, it's sharing. This exchange of thought, food, life, society. It's not about money. This is globalization," he said.

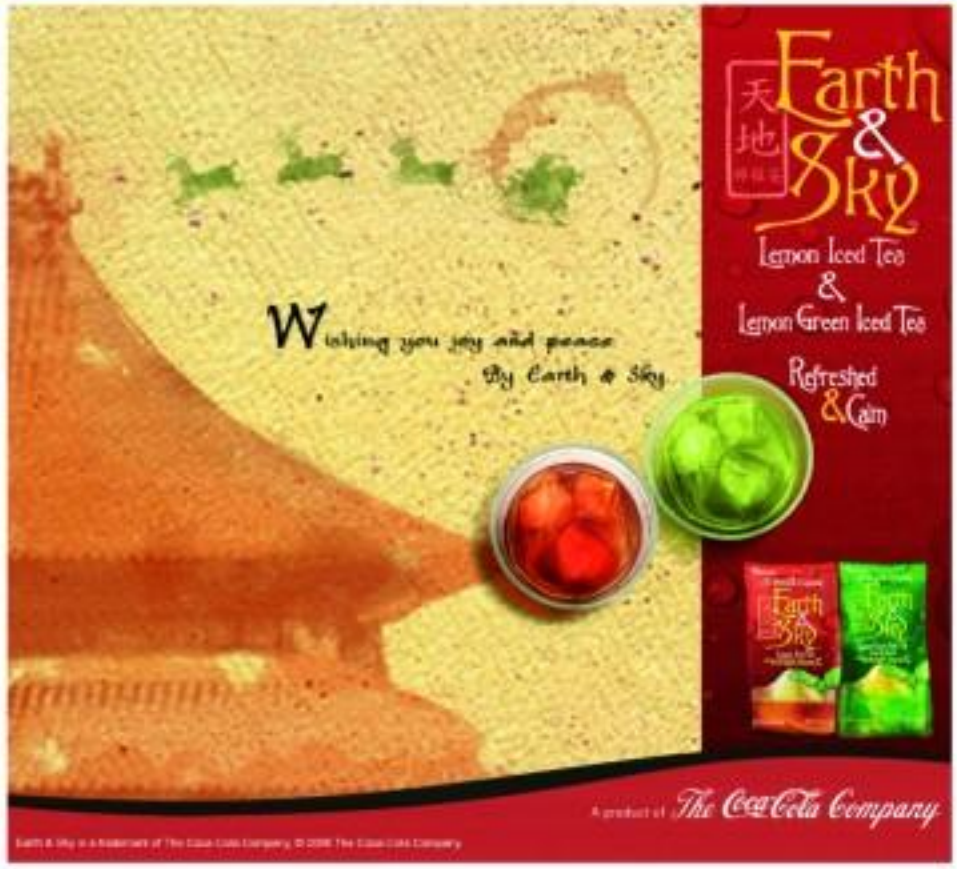
Mr. Johnny, who runs a tour bus company and also assists Korean businessmen who want to invest in the Philippines, spent a day with us, taking us around the Korean community in Makati.

We went to a Korean store, an English school for Koreans, a grocery and, a salon. And this was just the beginning!

We will have more Korean adventures to share for you next week.

So for page and take the plunge to your very own Korean adventure. As Angel Ilin, the general manager of Tony and Jackey, put it, "If you cannot go to Korea, we will bring Korea to you."

This is us, bringing Korea to you.



KIMCHI Chigae or stewed kimchi base curd stew

DJJIMGU Boko. Pan-broiled squid, sautéed with spicy sauce

MOKPO Mende Tuk. Mungo bean pan cake with ground pork

KIMCHI Chigae. Aged kimchi is sautéed and turned into soup.

Kimchi, bulgogi, senggalbi—take your pick!

Text and photos by Zoe Castro

EVER WONDERED WHAT KOREAN CUISINE is like? Enjoy Restaurant head chef Kim Byung Chul and I hurry this give us the lowdown on their country's food.

Koreans are said to maintain their clear complexions and their svelte figures by eating well-balanced meals. Meats are accompanied with fiber and vegetables, while spicy food helps with one's metabolism.

Korean food is served Iantao style, with everything at the table all at once. As in most Asian countries, rice is a staple food for Koreans, but instead of having just one or two main viands, this is eaten with a variety of side dishes.

Enjoy Restaurant is located at 62 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati. Open every day for lunch at 11:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. and dinner at 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Call 8900618, 8900620.

BAPJUL Honey Shin and head chef Kim Byung Chul

BIBIMBAP is a complete set of rice, vegetables and meat served on a heated stone bowl, so you can mix up the rice bowl and have something like fried rice.

CUBE radish kimchi, glazed sweet potato, and oyster-b

BULGOGI or Korean barbecue

SENGGALBI is of meat, and bruised with ea mar hairdoos.

KALBIJIM. Oxtails all share ribs with the bone, and because of their price, are easier to cook.

DWEJIM and tonks long being down your dookstand lovely.

BAN are sauces that sidings are not appetizers. "Some people think this are appetizers since they are served in small portions, and come before the large dishes."

JAPCHIMI. Vermicelli noodles (made with sweet potato starch) sauteed with vegetables

SAMYEOPSAL are pigment meat in pork belly. (Think fresh bacon, pure!)

CABBAGE Kimchi. Kimchi is probably the most popular Korean side dish.

GALBIJIM. Beef stew is very popular with Filipinos, says Shin.

JAPCHIMI. Vermicelli noodles (made with sweet potato starch) sauteed with vegetables

DENJANG Chigae or Soybean Paste Stew. Fermented soy bean paste is said to contain antioxidants.

Text and photos by Zoe Castro

TONY & JACKEY IS THE SPOT where people in-the-know go to for grade-A Korean hairstyling.

The Makati branch is located at the bustling Hamilla Avenue near Chino Roces. One step into the salon and you'll feel transported to Korea. There are Korean magazines on the shelves, and cute Korean stylists go about their business.

"What you see here is what you'll see in Korea," says Angel Kim, general manager of Tony & Jackey.

The salon uses top-of-the-line equipment, from the machine used for digital perming down to the scissors the stylists use. Some scissors even cost more than P30,000! It's certainly didn't scrimp to provide high quality service.

According to Kim, the stylists go through three to five years of intensive training (from shampooing, assisting, then cutting and styling) before they receive their certifications. This is to discipline stylists on the workmanship and attention that a stylist provides each customer.

All hair products are imported from Korea.

"While some salons use products made for European hair, we use Asian products made for Asians," says Kim.

The prices are competitive: Hair coloring starts at P1,200 for short hair; while coloring for extra long hair (hair below the bra line) is only P1,500.

Haircuts are priced at P800 for men and P600 for women. And no, there are no price tiers for junior assistants and senior teams. You are assured of an appointment with the salon's top stylist present.

Aside from Asian cuts, Tony & Jackey also specializes in Digital Perming. (Here (P5,000 for extra long hair), hair assistants (prices start at P1,500) and "the best Korean nail art," which are truly impressive artworks done on your fingertips!

Tony & Jackey lives up to its promise of bringing the best of Korea to its customers. The salon also provides a wide array of English and Korean magazines and feature-length videos, according to Kim, the "hardcore cuts can also while waiting for their girlfriends who are having hair treatments." Now, that's customer service!

Need a sleek, funky 'do? Check out the Korean salon Tony & Jackey

HE SUNG is an expert nail artist from Korea.

NAIL ART

Book an appointment soon. [illegible] once the word is out, everyone will be heading to this salon to get the funky hairstyles, too.

Tony & Jackey is set to open branches in Cebu, Alabang, Tiendesitas and Cavite, but for now, you can visit them at Royal Plaza, 2/F Remedios cor. Dasmariñas Sts., Makati (tel. 5200669, 8929884) and at 130 Pedro Gil cor. Remedios Sts., Malate (tel. 5200707). You can also visit them at www.tonyandjackey.com.

E-mail the author at zoecastro@yahoo.com

Missing Korea, loving the Philippines

Text and photos
by Miss Mark M. Sabbon
ABS-CBN Correspondent

IT'S NOT JUST WITH KIMCHI and Koreanovelas that Korea has invaded the Philippines. If you look around, especially inside campuses, you'll realize Korea is very much present in the country through its citizens.

There are some homesick Korean students who despite being away from their motherland, are still enjoying the Philippines.

What I love about the Philippines: The tropical fruits you have here. They taste very good. The mangoes, pineapples, ripe, juicy, bake and durian. I think it smells great! *What I miss about Korea:* I miss the subways. They're fast and comfortable. But I'm having fun passing the people's money in the driver here.—Oh, Ju-Jeong or Lissa, 23

What I love about the Philippines: It's great to study English here, and all things are cheap. *What I miss about Korea:* I miss my family and friends.—Jang, Joo Won or Alister, 16

What I love about the Philippines: The kind, optimistic people. They're a little slow, though. *What I miss about Korea:* the colorful autumn leaves.— Kim, Hyunki or Anthony, 23

What I love about the Philippines: beaches. The Sinulan Islands are very, very dirty and although we have the East Seaside's clean, it is too deep for swimming. *What I miss about Korea:* the cold! I don't know but I'll still it fried chicken. Everyone use red pepper powder to make it and it's very, very spicy. I still remember my tongue for a while.—Jeong, Gwang Su or Aslin, 20

What I love about the Philippines: The teachers, especially my teacher Mel. In Korea, we can't be too familiar with them and they are usually a lot older than the students. Here, they're not too old so they can relate to us better or be more familiar. *What I miss about Korea:* The Han River in general. That is where I usually hang out with friends, swimming in a nearby pool or dining in fine chains. That's like your Manila Bay here.—Ay Si Lee, Mi Ae or Mary, 20

What I love about the Philippines: The cheap prices for most things and services. *What I miss about Korea:* It is hot in Korea nowadays, and as you can see, there are so many bugs and gadgets trees in red and yellow.— Yu, Gyeonseon Heidi, 23

What I love about the Philippines: I have your many beautiful places, nice beaches and I enjoy my freedom. *What I miss about Korea:* I miss my father and my friends.—Koh, Yoo Shin, 12

What I love about the Philippines: I love the Philippines for its many pets, dressed or not. *What I miss about Korea:* I miss the strawberries and cheese, a lot of things building Korean buildings.—Cha, Yun Jin or Anne, 12

What I love about the Philippines: I love how the people are so crazy over fiesta memories. My teacher and I frequently do it even in the mid-day classes. *What I miss about Korea:* There are no big hands here, so I miss the cute and talented boy bands in Korea.—Kwon, Il Hee or Abigail

What I love about the Philippines: Jollibee. I like their Spaghetti and spaghetti. *What I miss about Korea:* Korean food, because Filipino food is too spicy!—Kim, Su Ai or Kate, 13

What I love about the Philippines: Cheap, nice to nothing. *What I miss about Korea:* My family.—Jeong, Tae Woo or Carl, 23

What I love about the Philippines: Korean restaurants everywhere! *What I miss about Korea:* Everything, especially the inside singing and relishing rice cookers.—Park, Na Rin or Sarah, 15

What I love about the Philippines: People in general are more relaxed than Koreans. *What I miss about Korea:* Our home doesn't have very big area.—Kim, Hyung Soo or Sol, 15

What I love about the Philippines: Low standard of living. I also like lalangos. *What I miss about Korea:* Korean anime and cookbooks, cute animal pouches and pencil cases.—Hong, Ou Eun or Ellen, 17

What I love about the Philippines: "Sis." because we do not have maids in Korea. *What I miss about Korea:* Boiled mussel talking and talking and talking.—Choi, Ha Hyo or Sandra, 10

What I love about the Philippines: Cheap, nice to nothing. *What I miss about Korea:* My family.—Jeong, Tae Woo or Carl, 23

What I love about the Philippines: I love nature here, the [illegible] bright early in the morning and [illegible] stars as well as night. *What I miss about Korea:* The Internet connection here in Korea is quarrly, but here I have to drive 1 mile 1.—Park, Min Ho or Tony, 17

What I love about the Philippines: It's not very hard here because I don't want to enroll in the pictures. I like your music and what's inside it. [illegible] teachers will me it sounds love. *What I miss about Korea:* They always sing the Philippine National anthem in my school, so I miss singing our national [illegible] Hwan, Ji Soo or Amy, 8

A CHOCOLATE-COATED bun-like, Puffed cereal cookies, P75

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SHRIMP Crackers, P58

FROZEN goodies

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Chocopie, rice crackers and other great Korean finds

SWEETS and snacks

DEFINITELY kinds of rice

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Zoe Castro

A FEW YEARS AGO, I WAS ON A PLANE to Seoul when a woman lady friend recommended dried pineapples.

I smiled and said, "Yes, thank you." Soo she took the hands and passed dried fruit over my palm.

On that same trip, when a saleslady at a DVD store saw that I was browsing, she made coffee for me, even if I didn't buy anything from her store.

Mr. Ariunaa Park said Koreans are naturally generous, and they love sharing their food.

Which is why I wasn't surprised at how eager they were to share authentic Korean delicacies, snacks and drinks when we visited Shin Mart, a big Korean grocery.

Shrimp chips, chocopie, canned drinks, rice wine, tons of beer, different kinds of tea, instant noodles, frozen goods and more. Best of all, the store workers as the staff worked to show us their favorites and the numerous interesting food items.

Shin Mart has been selling authentic Korean goodies for around 14 years now. And its enthusiastic to share its country's products with Filipinos here's natural also.

We left the store minutes later armed with sweets, full of goodies which Mr. Shin and his staff had prepared for us. We thanked her profusely.

In the car, Mr. Park was open a bag of glutinous cookies and made all of us take one. "I have the Korean song," he said. "If I see, it's yummy one."

Visit Shin Mart at 289 Tapiceria St. Brgy. Makati. Shin Mart also has branches in Baguio, Cebu, Manila, Tagaytay, Davao and will soon open in Iloilo.

HOT SAUCE, Chili paste

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INSTANT MEAL. Noodles

BISCUITS and dishes of authentic Korean snacks. Inset: Shin Mart's interior is cozy and welcoming for your tummy buds.

Grammar school

Young Koreans are flying to the country to learn English—and more

By Pam Pastor

YOUNG KOREANS ARE BEING sent by their parents to the Philippines to learn English for a number of reasons.

It's no big surprise that few are seen of available here and there schools offer one-to-one tutoring. At ECI Creative Communication Trainings Inc. (The Executive Bldg. cor. Makati Ave. and Jupi. Val Pajac Ave., Makati), there are 70 students taking care of 118 students. Kim, their youngest student is 5 years old while the oldest is 57.

We went on a tour around the school, which started small but has continued to grow. The school is currently preparing for peak season, which starts in December, by building bigger classrooms to accommodate more students. There are nine levels and three categories—beginner, intermediate and advanced.

One-to-one sessions are held inside small but cozy cubicles. The atmosphere is light and the students seem relaxed.

The teachers at ECI are different nationalities—Filipino homebrights. Some play chess and others board games with their students, while others watch videos to familiarize them with the language. Then there are students who choose to teach while using the telephone or even the phone. So many adult students enrolled this year, mother and mother were free to do what they do.

Mr. Park told us that many families end up going to the country for a vacation after hearing about the Philippines from kids who have come here to learn English.

The teachers, then, aren't just teachers. They are ambassadors in their own right.

MEGA/SE of the great student-teacher ratio. Korean students are given the attention they need.

IT'S JUST like any school — it's little more relaxed.

AUTHENTIC Korean snacks are available to make the students feel at home.

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2006 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER D1
LIFESTYLE 24/7

THE AUTHOR (extreme right) with her Korean colleagues

My mom says I have the best job in the world, as I am getting paid to see the world for free. I think she's right

Diary of a Seoul-based Pinay FA

By Mina C. Alipio
24/7 Contributor

EVERYONE CALLED me "Kamuning" at the Balagtas, where I used to work as a creative writer. The alias was given to me probably because I looked like a Korean woman.

But last July 30 came many weeks of late, my secret childhood dream of becoming a flight attendant somehow became a reality and what used to be just a scene of wishfulness in my past job turned out to be a premonition of what I would be doing in the next few months, or perhaps even years.

The job requirements are a lot of Korean physical factors. I used to think I was unqualified for the job. In job, since my teeth were not perfect (I wore braces), I had yet to find a solution to my acne problem, and I had myopia.

I halfheartedly applied for the flight attendant job thinking I had nothing to lose.

After having my braces removed, passing a series of interviews and practicing medical exams, I was offered the job. Together with 27 other Filipinas, we left for Seoul, makeup-less and giddy with high hopes of starting a new career in the land of kimchi and soap operas.

After nine weeks of cabin crew training, we were all equipped with the knowledge and skills needed, from how to serve meals and wine and what to do in case of emergencies, fire and hijacking, to the proper Hands-on "mushimake

MINA MILIPIO in flight announcement

ASIANA Airlines flight attendants in their training jumpsuits

THE AUTHOR with her batchmate Maureen Rivera

for each face shape.

This was not a walk in the park at all, especially since the instructors were all Koreans and the cultural differences and language barriers often got in the way of easy learning.

With the help of Brige Tiongco, Mina Villahermosa and Sheryl Israel, Filipina flight attendants who were also instructors in the training center, all 28 of us managed to graduate, and, soon after, start flying. Here's a typical work week for me.

Day one: A day off in Sydney

After an almost 10-hour flight from Seoul, the cabin crew get our whole days off in Australia. I was the only Pinay embarked; the rest were all Koreans. Fortunately, there was another Filipina FA who got to Sydney a day before we did, and she was staying in the same hotel.

It was my first ever long-haul flight. I was amazed with my senses. Chewy and Anne on a tour of the Harbor Bridge, the Sydney Opera House and Bondi beach. Seeing sights like these is one of the perks of being a flight attendant.

There is nothing right else to make me appreciate even more what we have in the Philippines. After frolicking on Bondi beach, I concluded that it didn't even come close to Boracay or Tubbataha.

There were Koreans everywhere I looked. I recognized some of them from the plane. Sydney is a favorite destination of Koreans who are crazy about travelling.

Day two: From Sydney to Seoul

I had to get up an hour before our wake-up call, because I wasn't on vacation when it came to doing my makeup in a short period of

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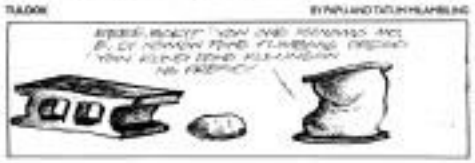

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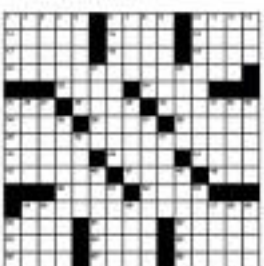
DAILY CROSSWORD



HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

				9				
		8				3		
	3		1		4		9	
		4		8		6		
1			6		7			2
		7		3		5		
	2		7		5		1	
		3				4		
				2				

Difficulty Level ★★★

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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
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Answer to previous puzzle

6	8	3	1	2	4	9	7	5
1	4	5	9	7	6	2	8	3
9	7	2	3	5	8	1	4	6
8	1	9	4	3	2	7	5	6
3	5	7	8	6	9	4	2	1
2	6	4	7	1	5	8	3	9
7	9	8	5	4	1	3	6	2
4	3	6	2	9	3	5	1	7
5	2	1	6	8	7	6	9	4

Diary of a Seoul-based Pinay FA

AT THE "JEWEL in the Palace" location

From page D1

time, those left the hotel, I met some Pinoy staff, OFWs who had been living in Sydney for more than five years.

At the airport, I saw that my Korean seniors were all carrying shopping bags and declaring the items at Customs. These people just have so cheap upkeep on things, especially make-up.

The flight back to Seoul was similar to the outbound trip, with just a few additional procedures for serving more meals to passengers. Upon arriving at the aircraft, I put on a pair of gray flats that we called "galley shoes," thereby modestly concluded a pre-flight check of the safety equipment in accordance to my training (life vest, oxygen bottle, etc.). After that, I set the headphones in a basket, magazines on the rack, the newspapers on the trolley near the door, set the four lavatories (just below, flower in vase, tenths, stains (couples in the know will) then opened the aisle and shifted the canned beverages by breaking the dry ice and scattering fluids in the beverage cart drawers. All these things I had to do in less than 15 or 20 minutes. I like to call this the Amazing Race, otherwise known as "Ground Preparation."

Keeping up with the Korean seniors who work quickly can be difficult. They call it "Pali pali," which in Tagalog are call "Dali-dali." It is the Korean culture of working quickly and accomplishing tasks to the nth of time.

After the controls door closed, I made the English announcement following the Korean translation. "Kamsamnida" (Korean for "thank you") was my cue to begin the announcement.

Whenever a Pinay close to school I, she automatically makes the English announcement, since English is our second language and we are known for speech delivery.

I have noticed that Koreans tend to be very shy with their English. I guess this is because, like China and Japan, they love their language so much they disregard opportunities to learn other languages. A Korean friend once told me that English is meant at all taught to most public schools and that speaking English was taboo for them. Even the newspapers that we sell on the trolley are all in Hangul, the Korean language, and only two dailies are in English. Most of the time, the English papers are ignored by passengers.

Day three—A day off in Seoul

At last! I got a day off in Seoul and I had enough time to do my laundry and grocery. At our hotels, I mean our dorms, we have washers (Nikki and Gilian, who were also off here too).

Our hotel was near Hongik University, so the place had a very youthful vibe, with lots of hip bars, stores and shops. College students flocked around the stores and this scene reminded me of the Tomasinos district in Quezon City. They were in loud and colorful clothes. Korean girls were in shocking pink and orange, and I could see that they loved accessorizing, plus animal prints and stripes, especially the big ones.

I've observed that Koreans are very updated when it comes to fashion, just like the Japanese. Korean women, young and old alike, are also very good with makeup.

AT BUCKINGHAM Palace

THE AUTHOR and Jess Rojas during makeup time

FLIGHT attendants on the bus

DAY OFF at Seoul with Nikki and Gilian

My friends and I went to the grocery and bought a week-long supply of food and other goodies for pandabong like cup noodles and chocs pie. Since everything is expensive here, a P2,000 satchel of groceries in the Philippines would probably last just a handful in Korea.

On our way back to the hotel, we took the bus and lost miserably we were able to ask. Thank heaven locals here do speak English, albeit with a heavy accent. Asking directions was a breeze.

Days four and five—Overnight in Hong Kong

We started the day with a briefing conducted by the in-flight manager in Korean. A kind Korean senior translated it for me in English, but for most flights, it was all up to me to figure out whatever was said in the briefing.

After the manager did a head count, we headed straight to Incheon International airport, considered one of Asia's best and most modern airports. Passing on our bus as we reached the aircraft, I recalled the movie "Catch Me If You Can."

Day six—A Taipei quickturn

A quickturn flight is a short itinerary flight, where that the crew need not deplane. They just simply have to wait for the next batch of passengers to come onboard. Almost all flights to Taipei and neighboring countries are quickturn, and Taiwan is one of them.

One look at the passengers and you can declare that Korea is indeed a very patriarchal society. As an old couple boarded the plane, the "alpha" or the woman carried all the baggage, while the man just held the way I used to helping the lady.

But in all fairness to Koreans, respect is very much obvious in the way they add suffixes to titles, like "-nim," to show politeness. For example, "manager" becomes "manager-nim."

Pinays can observe from Koreanovelas that Koreans frequently bow, and at different degrees or angles at that. In the cramped cabin, we once caught that the greater the degree of the bow, the more respect was shown. For casual greetings, we bowed at 15 degrees, while for apology, condolences or utmost respect, we bowed at 45 degrees, with our backs straight.

This Taipei flight was my very own. When I got to the hotel at around 7 p.m., I ordered room and had dinner sent to my room since I could hardly wait to start packing for my Manila flight the following day!

DAEGUDAY day

COFFEE or tea?

(NEXT D2)

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THE AUTHOR is a flight attendant of Asiana Airlines.

Diary of a Seoul-based...

Newspage B3

Day seven—Back to Manila

It was my first time to go home on duty since getting off from training, so I was a bit nervous. It was a shorter flight, seven-and-a-half minutes, namely Narita (also transiting from) to Ninoy Aquino International Airport. In Flight Attendant Training Center, we are taught the basics of South Korean economic growth.

I had a Kim Hyogsun in my introduction. It was not easy to do announcement in Filipino since some words like "continental blues" and "seatbelt" were translated to "chasing temperatures" and "tightening pigeonholes." I felt confident particularly in knowing the time. I was supposed to say "alas-diez y media ng gabi," but announced then it was to announce this time "sobrang mataas kakailan ang ika-sampu ng gabi," so I announced just announced this time with 2 clicks wise.

In my introduction, announced, I gave them only the briefest observation and all the grammar points like—showing which point, from who and particularly. Wishing with five stars. He is a single male, small employer was of the difficult first boy. I was coming home so he with my family, and with the exhaustive day-to-day flight was stressful.

Culture shock

I admire Koreans for their dedication to work. Often it's more for work, their study, etc. Hence they themselves to a very extreme, that is why think from the cheap cost of living in the Philippines, many of them prefer to live in the Philippines.

In the bar, dating (in Seoul and coping with all the cultural and linguistic differences may be hard, but it is manageable). Just keep your Three's Company in mind and serve.

In fact, I got to have a roadside servant wondering friends in Manila, [illegible] so just allowed 3 minutes [illegible] of eight days, so working the about 20 days or so it was really hard, especially since we have 2-3 more days off in Seoul.

About the rewards of the job, let's put my it's enough, although not to high in the salaries that others [illegible] great. However, only the airline allows you to come home frequently, and that is just priceless the second for even a hundred only or Hong Kong one-hour or Seoul.

A pair of my mates' saying are at the end there of [illegible] maybe to [illegible] give with my co-mates, new hire, and easy. But my mom says I have the best job in the world. I am getting paid to see the world for free. I think she's right. She always is.

Lost in translation

By Kenny Cayas
LSCS Correspondent

TEACHING KOREANS EN-glish is both fun and challenging. I should know. It's what I do. Here are some of my experiences along this alley.

Hanna

Hanna is a 7-year-old superstar in the making. Irresistible she gets, people just swoon over her and love her. Sounds hyper.

In only such a Hanna's month before she begins learning English, making her more super-proud.

One night in our sessions, I decided to set out on the unexpected spelling drill.

Hanna: Nihal's your favorite number? (Grinning) number ten?

Me (number) Seven!

Ha (Okay spell it)

Me S—Seven,—Amin—Amin, son

Ha That's not, Okay (looking in a picture of a telephone on the wall), where's your favorite color?

Me Ha, easy (secondly)!

Ha (Huh)

Me Ha—easy!

Ha (Hmm...think, look lighting in the head) Oh, orange. Ha, orange (carefully) Ha-orange, Hanna.

Me (Orange)

Ha (Could spell it.

Me O-r-a-n-g-e—o-r-a, Amin, o-r—Ha, no, no, Red.

Mike

Mike is a tall, handsome and faithful 10-year-old Japanese.

He has "issues" as a consumer if not for love something's come, or worries. Example: "Mike does not mind all around the world. He must be rich."

Mike (ML) (Confidentially) Oh, no, no Mr, no it is—Sally Salon, Ann Hilton.

Me (Pondering) If the father is rich, the son is also rich.

Me (No, no, Father. He no (thinking hard, looking down).

Me Okay, but you. Why do you feel this? Don't be shy. Many girls like rich boys, why do you feel shy?

Me Just... I still love her.

Me It's okay. Why did you come here for the

day?

Me (smiling) Anonymity's dyes...

Me You're using "free" the wrong way, Mike. Who might you to say it like that? What do you are is like that?

Me Interesting with me! Sadness I feel...

Paul

Paul is a 6-year-old Japanese who got to homesick. But he also likes he would protect himself. Every day, he starts to school without nothing. He likes with father and mother all love his clothes. Paul's realities was very very Jesus and he really didn't have the will to memorize his, and of saying a writing just the following verbs (saying not speaking drills: that, will, sleep, the mother, I caught).

Paul (P): For mild color time.

Me What is it?

Pa For detailed repair (Crying).

Me That's great. Have you ever tried to say it to [illegible]?

P: No, daddy times, but every time I've wanted (On him, I've begun (to him (brings after) (also the).

Me Well, I hope you've successful this time.

P: I hope so, too. After all, I can't keep driving for the rest of my life.

Tori

The very one of this is by three or [illegible] back where I was starting out in the junior my. I swear I couldn't make sense of his something, plus he disliked repeating himself (suffered no judgmental) tempo.

Me Hi, Tori, How's your day?

Tori (T): (Silent to us, looking much

(Silent)—"—" &"#—"&"#)

Me (Tone again)

P: (Light in movement) (Hmh)—" &"#—"

Me Yes, I think understand. Say, a loud and thumbs pleats.

D: (Having up and bumping the desk) (Pa—"(—"(#%, —"&—" " # #%%—" #("&—" &"—"&—" to)

Me Hey, hey, easy on the desk. For, bring up your [illegible] desire to pronounce it. Don't use this man slowly and loudly, okay?

D: Aaaaaaaaghhh!!! Ahhhhhhhh!—— (Hh——— &#!(—" (#ohh——"—"&%—" &#(—" (#ohh——"—"&%—" &#(—" Understand? Understand? Understand?

Me (Hmm, Okay. Okay, yeah).

D: Aaaaghhh! You don't understand! Why you don't understand, anyway! I'm good pronouncer! Aaaghh! I'm good pronouncer, aaghhhh!

The Parts

The extra-acceptable Bob Sands started out with the first Russian drifter every night in the five-month time in a row in three household.

One discussion, Mother Park suddenly decided to investigate me while I looked up quote ideas. She began singing (what Dave's "My Heart Will Go On" for this was the one and only English song they knew). Hilma (as for she was, was) applauded her soloist, prompted her to motion to her daughter to sing the same song again. The "Titanic" hymn was then sung one after the other by the seven members of the family, from the top every note. And the finale was, of course, me! I couldn't wait for it to end.

24/7 LIFESTYLE

"JEWEL in the Palace"

"WINTER Sonata"

"LOVERS in Paris"

Spellbinding TV fare

By Melissa Tolan
24/7 Correspondent

Just what is it about Korean drama that has Filipino audiences completely spellbound?

THE HYPE OVER KOREAN dramas, which began airing alongside Chanoeylas three years ago, is as strong as ever. Pinoy viewers can't seem to get enough of such shows as "Jewel in the Palace," "Lovers in Paris" and "Endless Love."

Just what is it about Korean drama that has Filipino audiences completely spellbound?

Short and sweet

One thing that characterizes a Korean drama is its refreshingly shorter length compared to its Filipino, American or Latin counterparts. While Pinoy telenovelas and American soaps usually have hundreds of episodes spanning years, sometimes even decades, Korean dramas usually follow a 16- to 24-hour-long episode format. Moreover, future characters are introduced, giving us a less complicated plot and a more realistic story line.

"I think Pinoy audiences are fed up with soap operas that last for years. They want something they can come in and in the same time would have a beginning and an ending. Korean dramas fit the bill since they are short enough for viewers to watch the entire run. And since they [dramas] only a few main characters, the audience is able to become in-

SPELLBINDING E2

You know you're addicted to Korean dramas if...

By Melissa Tolan
24/7 Correspondent

1. You're told, or you're big-ig, to lose 10 pounds in the hopes that one day you'll look like your favorite Korean actress without set of stabbing or scrubbing.
2. You've scolded your favorite drama at least three times, and your favorite lesson—the word "death sentence" for most living—almost fit.
3. Someone asks you to recall a particular scene from your favorite drama and you realize it is detailed, including the actors' lines and the episode number where such scene is found.
4. You mesmerize your friends, family, classmates, officemates and just about anyone who hasn't caught the Korean-drama bug yet by which Korean actress you think you look like and the kind of hairstyle that would make a show for their salesman proud.
5. Your compilation's sing-boss features the drama songs of "My Girl," "Full House," "Mother Sounds" (or the sing-boss features the cast members).
6. Your mp3 player contains mostly K-pop songs or Korean ballads from your favorite drama's soundtrack.
7. You could recognize drama dialogue in Korean without even reading the subtitles.
8. You know what the hell that means.
9. You Korean drama collection is big enough for you to open a small video rental shop.
10. You're part of several fan clubs in a region in either Korean, such as those found in soompi.com, dramafever.com and koreanovelas.com, or dedicated to your favorite K-idol (it's a thing).
11. You frequently surf the Internet to look up not the actor's/actress's date of birth, but their blood type, astrological sign, favorite food, favorite color, favorite movie, favorite song, favorite number, favorite hobby, favorite sport, favorite subject in school, favorite pet peeve, favorite vacation spot, favorite gift to receive, favorite gift to give, favorite flower, favorite perfume, favorite cologne, favorite cologne, favorite cologne

Confessions of a 'Jewel' addict

How could anyone not fall in love with this naive but determined heroine with a heart of gold who struggled at all costs and endured all to achieve her dreams?

By Walter Ang
Star Correspondent

BY THE TIME THE FIRST run of "Jewel in the Palace" was about to end earlier this year, I had become so enamored with the show that when two of its actors visited the Philippines, I wasted three hours amidst a throng of fans to catch a glimpse of them.

When they finally appeared onstage, they were as small as ants from where I stood. They sweated away after only about three minutes in the spotlight.

I was first encouraged to watch this iconic movie (the show is on its eleventh rerun/night as it airs on GMA network) when a friend told me how funny it was. I assure, forget the seminal "Betty La Fea" back in the '90s and how hilarious it was, so I aimed for swordsmith.

It's about Jang Geum, a little orphan girl who wants to become a kitchen chef in the King's palace. Her uncle "pawns" the title all under to," he explained. "When someone steals the food she needs to cook for her first exam, revenge ensues (Duh)."

Intrigued, I dutifully tuned in to see what the fuss was all about. I figured that I, too, could have a good laugh over all this melodramatic silliness of circling over split milk, or in this case, stolen fruit.

First time

The episode I caught that fateful night had Jang Geum (already one of the junior kitchen staff) where she was able to pass that exam by making her own flour's pleasing discretion in an attempt to find out what was causing the paralysis of the King's son. Ah, a mystery as well!

As it turned out, one of the ingredients used in the prince's meal, while mushroom in small amounts, became a paralyzing agent when its **effects were magnified by another ingredient** in the recipe. Now did Jang Geum prove her claim? She conducted the recipe again, adjusting the amount of the paralyzing ingredient, ate it herself, and promptly fell to the floor as she lost all feeling (cute) movements.

The episode ended with her friends chiding her, "I don't know if you're smart or stupid." I was laughing so hard I thought I'd end up losing all sensation in my limbs myself. And I was hooked.

I bet could anyone not fall in love with this naive but determined heroine with a heart of gold who struggled at all costs and endured all to achieve her dreams? If that's quite a mouthful, it is. In the grand scheme of soap operas, her plight is nothing new. She floats, here is a from take on the tales old themes and archetypes.

JANG Geum—and the way she outmaneuvers the many hurdles thrown her way—is an inspiration.

Production values

Jang Geum's trials, carnals and ultimate triumph where she is hatred to shift currents and becomes slowly fire help doctor to travel on a real historical figure. The show is set in another culture and in another time—something fanciful to take the mind away from our daily grind. Production values include gorgeous costumes, detailed sets and inventive camera framing. Let's not forget all those wonderful sequences dealing with food preparation!

However, it was the superb Tagalog translation and dubbing that really kept me glued. The emotions contained by the dubbers were spot on. The voice actors of Jang Geum's adopted parents had just the comic timing to match the facial expressions of the Korean actors. They were absolutely hilarious.

Lessons learned

The translation also brought "deep" Tagalog closer to a large audience. Ask him/ex-lover, who already as rare actually understand Tagalog sometimes with context guesswork and nausea!

So it was great to hear the luminous and poetry of our own language come to life. I don't know by how many hours/months/years I'll end up dusting the rest of the show but I must know the Tagalog words for author Chun the episode which Jang Geum had to cook stuffed duck/dugo for the King.)

"Jewel in the Palace" came into my life at a time when I was dealing with my very own case of children characters with ill motives. With Jang Geum, I could have some do-overs, ng examinations and also pick-up—hokey as this might sound—tidbits of inspiration as she overcomes several the many hurdles thrown in her way.

I spent the next several months living vicariously through Jang Geum, screaming and cheering my fist at her enemies, laughing at their exposed comeuppances, and sighing at their eventual downfall. For all the months the show was on, I followed Jang Geum through her multiple stumbles and cheered her on her every rise. And, yes, I refused to unveil spoilers/plot twists. If it means I would miss the show.

See all saved a Korean fairy tale every now and then.

E-mail the author at writingwalt@yahoo.com

"THE BEAST and the Beauty"

"DADDY Long L

Korean

By Pan Pastor

A FEW YEARS AGO, "MY Sassy Girl" (still our all-time favorite Korean love story) broke into our consciousness and paved the way for countless other Korean movies that have found a bigger audience worldwide.

Even Hollywood has started paying attention, setting out with "Like Water," which was based on "I Many," and planning a Hollywood version of "My Sassy Girl," which is set to be released next year and will star Jesse Bradford and Elisha Cuthbert.

Fans are worried. Rumored Tiny'm gonna ruin it" and "Sassy Girl" director and author.

If you're a Korean movie fan, you've probably seen "The Classic," "Friend," "A Lover's Concerto," "My wife is a Gangster" and "White Valentine" by now. Here are other Korean movies you might enjoy. I'm no such thing before Hollywood decides to do another remake.

Drama

'The Crescent Moon'

Starring: Han Ji-in, Lee Ji-ah, Jang Ki-yong, Jang Seo-hee, Jang Mi-geong

The plot: A haunted story of a young girl's unconditional love for her mother-stillborn brother

Why you should watch it: it will make you love your siblings more.

'Jenny and Juno'

Starring: Park Shin-hyang and Kim Woo-sung

The plot: What happens if a girl, pregnant and in her final year, has her boyfriend, (a guy 13 years old? This controversial film tackles the difficult subject of teenage pregnancy.

Why you should watch it: Because Park Shin-hyang is adorable. And because it will make you think about your own choices.

'The Way Home'

Starring: Kim Tod-mee, Ye Seung-bo

The plot: Seven-year-old Sang-woo is left to his with his dad (road guard) mother in a small village. The movie shows how you can have hearts and how affection can be expressed without words.

Why you should watch it: It will make you want to hug your own grandmother for a very long long time.

Spellbinding TV fare

Paragraph 01

ordered with dress despite their shorter length," says Ramil Yan, a law student and an avid Koreaserye-holic/lover.

The whole package

Aside from its length, there is the plot itself. While some Korean dramas have one-off stand-alone stories, most have plots that develop as they go along. Those dramas become Cinderella story lines or include plots devolve/turn another novel/short book/comic/graphic novel themes, lasting for a few episodes or getting love on sometimes several.

However, Pinoy drama fans do not seem to mind drama, as long as those plot lines are handled up by solid acting, crisp dialogue, concise/terse, and a good looking cast. Scratching functions as a bonus. Korean producers have long known and used this good production value as a long way in terms of ratings, and they do, use good upbringing in handsome/beautiful actors.

The 2002 drama "Winter Sonata," for example, while the show has received a lot of good reviews (which included one of the lead's developing amnesia, getting sun overexposure, and reaching a double climax and becoming deaf/dull), it was nevertheless considered a classic not only by Filipino audiences but as well as by many in the Western Asia.

So aren't it enchanted using cinematic chemistry to revert to bad actors, like Yong Joo and Choi Ji Woo, boomerang-ing melodrama by recovered memory, empowers such as New Age-inspired Cinema, thought-provoking dialogue and, best of all, a fabulous story of love love set against gorgeous Korean scenery and backdrops.

The two others "Winter Sonata" was filmed, such as Nathalie's island and the Chuncheon area, have become popular tourist spots. Unsurprising tourist agencies have organized very packages/deals/tours TV/cinema.

Filipino values

Another reason we Filipino have/create a liking to Korean drama is the values found in the shows is their core ones.

Yes families, in romance dramas, are not always nicely romantic only one or two kissing scenes and not much holding hands. Compared to hearts and Americans ways that features a lot of hot sex scenes, Filipinos find it easier to love with Korean dramas," explains Yan. That is the point, "and honestly, we have hugs and kisses shared by couples in Korean dramas. In some much more meaningful ways."

Family also plays an important role in Korean dramas. Korean always take into consideration their family members in making important decisions. Many Pinoys find this one familiar.

Korean wave

The Korean drama hype is an undeniably Filipino phenomenon. In fact, by the end of January/begin broadcasting Korean soaps in 2003, following the success of powder/face drama, "Winter Sonata," Southeast and East Asian countries, such as Taiwan, Singapore and Thailand, had already the same two or three months or Kuwait also began showing Korean dramas as early as the/regular network's/network.

Korean drama has now spread to all things Korean, such as food, films and music. Korean restaurants have sprung up in many countries in Asia and Europe, and it is not uncommon to see Korean pop singers/actors/actresses in Asian countries.

The popularity of Korean culture has also sparked a/some interest in all things Korean, such as food, films and music. Korean restaurants have sprung up in many countries in Asia and Europe, and it is not uncommon to see Korean pop singers/actors/actresses in Asian countries.

"SEX is Zero"

"THE CRESCENT Moon"

"JENNY and Love"

They will make you laugh, they will make you cry and some will even scare you. Skipping the horror films, we present to you some of our favorite Korean movies—a little dramas, a little comedy and a lot of romance

movie marathon

"THE WAY Home"

Romance

'The Beast and the Beauty'

Starring: Kim Seung-hoon and Han Ga-in

The plot: Gong-gun, a voice actor, has had to bite it, his blind girlfriend, about his real appearance. When she regains eyesight after a surgery, he goes to extreme measures to change his looks and hold on to their relationship.

Why you should watch it: It's funny and love-invoking(y)-sweet.

'Daddy Long Legs'

Starring: Ha Ji-won, Won Bong-hee, Han Ji

The plot: Borrowing (a ride from the book by Jean Webster), "Daddy Long-legs" is about Cha Dong-shi, a girl who lost her parents and has to learn to be independent early. She survives with the help of an invisible benefactor and manages to get her dream job where she falls in love with a colleague.

Why you should watch it: Because the story will make you want to see the film again.

'My Little Bride'

Starring: Moon Geun-young and Kim Rae-won

The plot: Seven and Sangmin's grandfathers made a promise during the Korean war—that they would become in-laws. Seven and Sangmin are forced to marry... and hilarity ensues because Seven is just in high school and Sangmin is a new student at her school.

Why you should watch it: Because only Koreans can manage to make the story of a high-school girl forced to marry an adult movie and turn it all sick.

'Millionaire's First Love'

Starring: Hyun Bin and Lee Soo-ryun

The plot: Jin Kyung is a spoiled rich kid who is basically a slave to his grandfather's will to go to school in a remote Korean town. There he meets Eun-moon, a special girl who ultimately changes him for life.

Why you should watch it: Because,

"APRIL Snow"

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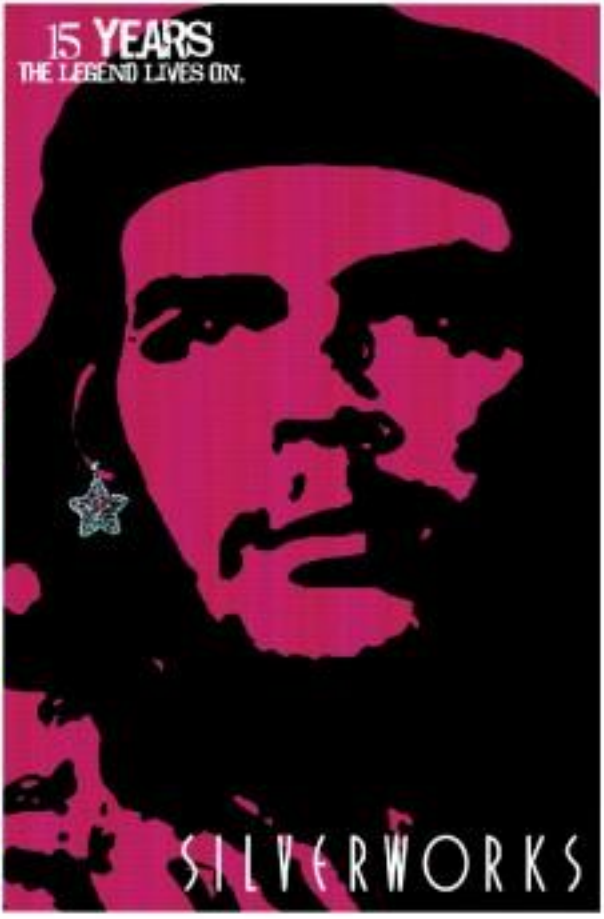

Love this BoA!

This Korean pop star has captured the attention of millions of fans worldwide

By Ashlai Oy
24/7 Correspondent

THIS 20-YEAR-OLD POP JEM HAS conquered Korea and Japan. Let's hope we're next!

"Movie is universal" is a statement that perhaps holds more truth for the Filipino. Whether it's an animé theme, a song by Thalia or Yu Hi, as long as it's got a catchy beat, we will sing it. With the influx of Korean telenovelas, Korean culture, and, heck, actual Koreans, it may not be too long now for Boh, Korea's No. 1 music sensation, to reach our shores.

Fairy-tale start

In 1998, the Korean recording company SM Entertainment was looking for someone who would set the Asian music world on fire. Britney Spears had just debuted to fantastic success in the West, and boy bands were all the rage. SM was looking for someone similarly strong. The company held open auditions among Korean teens, and got a fairy tale story.

One dark teenager auditioned and answered "yes" to the question "do you have any younger siblings?" The kid in question—also asked to audition, and suddenly, SM Entertainment had found their girl: 13-year-old Boa Kwon.

Boa went through two years of vigorous training, not in singing or dancing, but in languages. She was taught Japanese and conversational English (and later on, Chinese) before she even got to performance lessons. That part was quickly concluded as trainers and choreographers were amazed at how well she performed at her age.

HOT JUST a singer

After a minor name change from Boa to Boh, assuming "Boa of Angel," the girl released her first Korean album, "It's Point It," in 2000. The album debuted in the Top 10 within only one week—a feat for quite some time, as the Korean music industry fell for the now-13-year-old star.

In early 2001, Boh released a mini-album, "Jumping into the World," to further entrench herself in the Korean pop scene. But SM Entertainment had bigger plans for her. It worked out a deal with Japanese recording company Avex Trax to have Boh debut in that country.

From K-Pop to J-Pop

A Japanese version of the single "It's Point It" hit No. 20 in Japan's Oricon chart. It was the opening salvo of Boh's march in Japanese fame. Three more singles followed: "Amazing Kiss," "Eien(It was Remember)" and "Listen to My Heart," each one debuting higher and higher in the charts.

Finally, in March 2002, Boh released her first Japanese full-length album "Listen to My Heart," which debuted at No. 1 and would remain there for nearly 91 weeks. Boh had arrived big time.

Wonder woman

Six years, five Korean albums, four Japanese albums and 28 singles all in all, Boh continues to be one of the most recognizable Korean pop acts. She's become an icon of her country. Proof of this is her performing at the 2004 Korean Music Festival in Sydney, Australia, the Arirang "Hallyu" (Korean Wave) Concert in Los Angeles, and at the 2005 Apec conference.

Much like other internationally acclaimed artists, Boh has expanded her range to include acting and modeling. She was the voice of Heather The Opossum in the Korean and Japanese versions of "Over the Hedge," taking over Avril Lavigne. Boh has also served as spokesperson for a variety of companies, most recently Levi's and Olympus' Korean counterparts.

Now up on her list of conquests, according to her recording company, is a Chinese album, and it's hard not to bet on an American album soon, too. Given how her mark is rising in that country as well, (thanks to her videos playing on MTV3, the SE MTV channel for Koreans, you can be sure Hollywood is salivating at the thought of bagging her next.

Best of soul

Boh's brand of infectious, hip-pop-and-soul-stirring ballads has captured the attention of millions of fans worldwide. This immensely talented singer consistently produces some of the best music you've probably never heard of—not in the Philippines, anyway. But that is likely to be corrected in the near future.

Check out her songs, and I promise you'll be hooked. Even if you might not understand what she's saying. (Like, that has ever stopped us, right?)

Korean movie marathon

From page E3

admit it, the rich boss falls for poor girl formula works.

'Too Beautiful To Lie'

Starring: Kim Ha Neul, Kang Sung Woo

The plot: Joo Young Joo is a lovable co-ed who ends up with an engagement ring that Choi Hee Chul was planning to give to his girlfriend. She travels to his hometown and tries to give it back to his family but, because of misunderstandings (think "While You Were Sleeping"), they end up thinking she's his fiancee.

Why you should watch it: You'll like it if you're a fan of Korean romances.

'My Tutor Friend'

Starring: Kwon Sang Woo, Kim Ha Neul, Kang Ta, Eun Ji Won

The plot: Choi Ae was voted high school kids. One of her students is Ji Hoon, a rich, obnoxious delinquent. Somehow, in between clothes deliveries and kung fu scenes, they end up romantically involved.

Why you should watch it: Because it's silly and funny and sometimes infuriating, like a lot of Korean romcom films.

'100 Days with Mr. Arrogant'

Starring: Ha Ji Won and Jang Hyuk

The plot: A high school girl accidentally dents a young guy's car. Making her believe the damage is too costly to fix, he tricks her into becoming his slave for a hundred days.

Why you should watch it: Because it's silly and funny and sometimes infuriating, like a lot of Korean romcom films.

Other funny romance films you might want to watch are "When Summer Rises Breeze," "The Rainy Day" "My Boyfriend is Type B" and "My Sister? Oh My God."

If you'd rather skip the romances and Duff and go for dark, serious movies, you might want to watch "Memories of Murder," "Oldboy" "Sympathy for Lady Vengeance" and "A Bittersweet Life."

Tell us about your favorite Korean movies at [illegible] and we'll publish one other lucky soul.

Endless extravagance at the Lobby Lounge.
Enjoy the ensemble of eighty-eight delicately decadent desserts prepared by our Master Pastry Chef and a 10-piece chamber orchestra. Luxury is right at your lap in the city's largest dessert buffet at Makati Shangri-La.
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Lobby Lounge
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
LIFESTYLE

A day in the life of a rock star

READY to rock and roll. Harlem Acuram, Vic Mercado, Qnas Qnas promo winner Roberto Ng Jr., Bamboo and Iris Cruz

Pepsi gave the Qnas-Qnas grand prize winners rockin' makeovers and the rare chance to hangout with the country's hottest band—Bamboo

PEPSI'S AVP for marketing Clare Beaumont (third from right) with Qnas Qnas winners Ronald Dionisio, Rhea Jalon, Tracy Ann Molero, Ng and Randy Rugnao

THEY made every hour count. And quite literally!

As the grand prize winners of Pepsi's Qnas Qnas promo, five lucky individuals—along with four of their friends—were treated like stars as only the biggest rock band could. Complete with a full makeover and the rare chance to hang out with the biggest band in the country today, how much more rockin' can life be?

They didn't win the much coveted Sony Reunion PS3OS classified Walkman Phone Pepsi gave away every hour, 24 hours a day, every day from Sept. 13-Oct. 31, but they did win a ticket to a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet youth rock icon group Bamboo! Backstage passes, a dinner with their idol, and a photo shoot with the music heroes... to them it's got be no less than that!

Winner Randy Rugnao of Recto Inc, Elton Jalon of Zaragoza, Ronald Dionisio of Balacan, Tracy Ann Molero of Quezon City, and Robert Ng Jr. of Marikina had a fun filled day with their fortune to win.

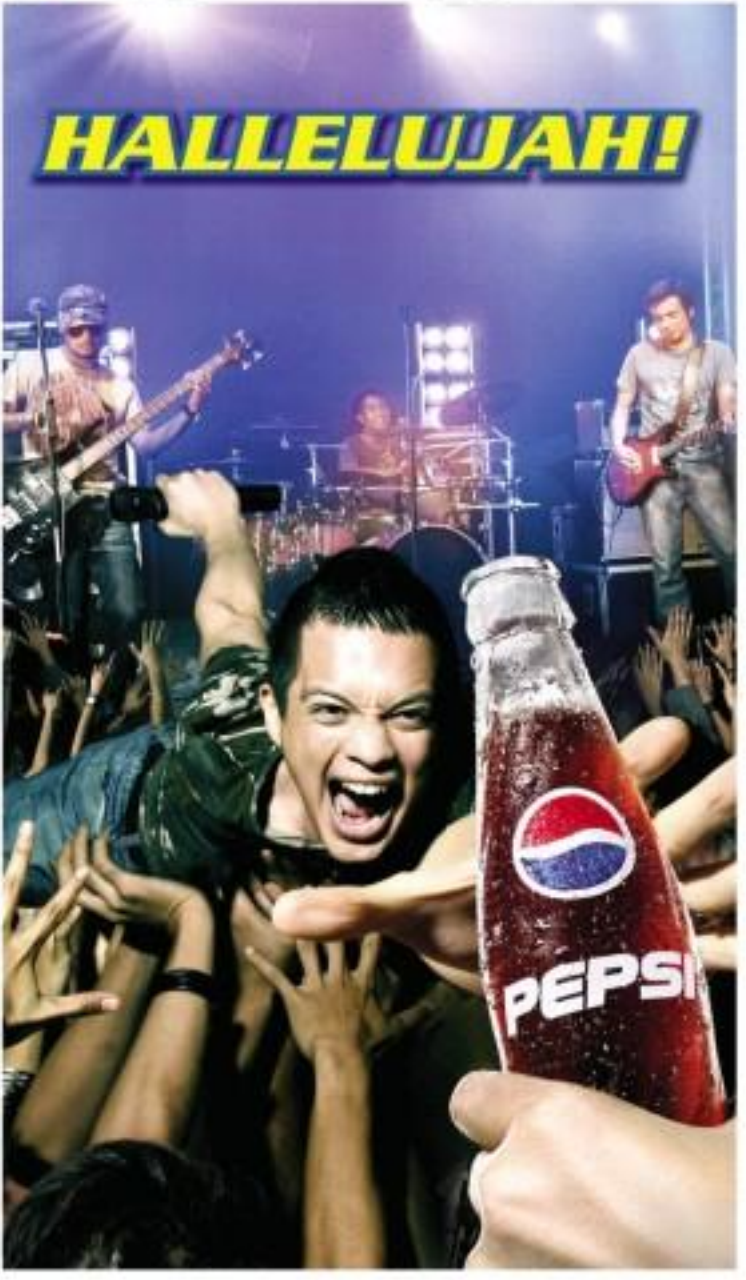
Our all winners Rugnao and Jalon flew into Manila, and met Dionisio, Molero and Ng. Pepsi's resident team, led by AVP for marketing Clare Goerzen and brand manager Mitzi Miranda, welcomed them. Once ready, the group headed to Headkoppe's Flagship store in the SM Mall of Asia.

ASM/YI

QNAS-QNAS promo winner Molero

PEOPLE winner Jalon (center) with Rugnao, Mercado, Bamboo and Cruz

ROCK ON! With Mercado, Rugnao and Cruz. Standing: Acuram and Bamboo



A day in the life of a rock star

Passage F1

10 a.m. The clothes make the man...

So, how does a rock star dress? The Pepsi stars of the day were about to find out.

With Penshoppe's cutting-edge pieces and funky accessories, the participants were starting to look and feel like celebrities.

"My, are really helpful fashion tips," remarked Marian. Added Jaime in jest: "I feel so hyper!"

STYLE hub Penshoppe boutique in SM Mall of Asia

DESTINATION! Fashion central! Pieces from Penshoppe

ORAS-ORAS promo winner Nyland Juanee Mercado of Trade Marketing grabs some fun his rock-star makeover

ME'WITH friends Norlani Nacion, Jeannene Santandrea, Jennilyn Ng and Flavie Morales (partly hidden) get ready to for their styling session.

ORAS-ORAS promo winner Mariano and friend Sheridan Lee Palen look through the many great buys at Penshoppe.

BUCKLE! Ensemble at Penshoppe cap.

Some rockin' fashion tips the winners got:

1. Experiment! Express your individuality through style for trying on not-so-ordinary combinations. As well-one style, there are no rules!

2. Accentuate! Choose pieces that will flatter your physique.

3. Simplify! Style should still reflect your personality. If anything, it should bring out what's there. If you're not comfortable with the look, it'll show.

JOYCE Dedicatoria, Jacqueline Mae Higa, Jay Pitos and Marco Ines a blast while shopping at Penshoppe SM Mall of Asia.

12 noon

Eat, drink and be merry...

After a morning of fashion styling, the gang took a short break to their backs, schedule to enjoy a hearty lunch at Jollibee's Greenhills 2, after a delicious meal and some quick downtime to recharge, the hyper crew headed there to a beauty hub, Propaganda!

CRISTINA Evangelista, Jaime, Jennilyn Ng, Vicente Santandrea Mercado, Pepsi brand manager Alvin Miranda, Ng, Morales, Liezl Agustud, Maribel Marcial, Yolanda Berigena, Mary Grace Marcial and Victoria Calimpong enjoy lunch at Jollibee.

1 p.m. Your hair is your crowning glory...

BEAUTY central Propaganda

A PROPAGANDA stylist inserts hair weaves.

To complete their rock-star transformation, a new individual-ized look was created for each of the 21 participants by Propaganda Salon's ensemble of expert hair and beauty experts, led by none other than Jing Moran, who styled Jhyel were Aviche Rondez, Faye Munoz and Rambou during their own respective Pepsi photo shoots.

Blow dryers buzzed, scissors clipped. And voila! Now, they're ready to show off their hot, hot new looks!

THE PROPAGANDA crew team dazzles the winners with stylish hairdos.

ME'IS present with his new 'do.

MEMES gets a new look.

Rock Mo To even's

After dinner with the whole band, Pepsi's fine guests of honor were called onto the stage by Pepsi Philippines Marketing head, Clint Guerrero. Interviewed briefly in front of a huge media audience, Orasians responded when asked why he joined, "Bamboo is my favorite band. My friends and I were so excited. I really wanted to win just so I could meet Bamboo."

And meet Bamboo, he did!

From the darkness of the wings, a strangely familiar voice chanted to sing, "Alcoholadolescent". Shrieking could be heard from fans of him as the band took over the stage. Bamboo Mañalac, bassist and Mark Dan Been had definitely brought the house down.

Like true blue rock stars, Pepsi's winners and their friends sang, danced and even screamed with obvious enjoyment.

Miranda shared, "We're so glad we in Pepsi had this chance to actually meet and spend a whole day with our consumers. It seems our hunch that we have been able to give them a unique Pepsi experience which they truly enjoyed and will always remember."

Guerrero added, "We are very thrilled with the unprecedented success of the promo. This is our way of thanking our loyal consumers for loving and living the drinker spirit! Pepsi rejuvenates. This results were truly inspiring. And because of this, Pepsi drinkers can expect more exciting and rockin' marketing programs to come."

THE BUDGET band in the country today, guitarist Ira Cruz, drummer Vic Mercado, bassist Nathan Nacion and vocalist Bamboo

CAP IT off with Pepsi!

BAMBOO performs with club energy

PEPSI Dare Orasians winners Randy Regino, Ronald Dimalanta, Tracy Ann Meiers, Elena Jakosalem and Rubie to Ng Jr. on stage with Pepsi-BVP marketing head Clint Guerrero

PEPSI Orasians winners Jeremy Lopez, Liezl Agustud, Guerrero, Jeanne Mercado and Mitz Miranda

3 p.m. Lights, camera, action!

BEFORE: John Dee Esparza, Nicholas Soria, and Omar Ortiz promo winner Nanoli, Imelda and Dennis Ebanico

AFTER: Looking chic with new looks at the Pepsi photo shoot

BEFORE: Joseph, Felix, Arnold and winner Randy Segovia, and William Gaston

AFTER: Rockin' on!

BEFORE: Evangelista, Mary Grace and Maribel Marcial, promo winner Jolanda Enriquez

AFTER: Looking sleek for their Pepsi photo shoot

BEFORE: Dedicatoria, Joseph Ilare Mendoza, Higo, Lea Pelias and Chico Diaz, promo winner Mirano

AFTER: Jump for joy with their new-happening gang!

BEFORE: Morales, Pepe winner Ng and Jennilyn Ng

AFTER: Showing off their funky groups at the Pepsi photo shoot

From Pinoypinoy, all were excited as they headed to their first photo shoot against the Pepsi logo. they revealed their inner celebrities. Adan laughed, "I feel like a model."

Certainly, the winners posed like pros. One of them, Dionisio, who definitely not afraid to project for the camera. He constantly created his lips and threw intense looks at the camera. Ahh...now that's celebrity confidence!

Hey, his videos were not to be outdone. Ng shocked with his groovy-pretty-clown-house jumps and sharp gazes. "And Arnay pala magling model," he chuckled.

Regine even added: "Dapat ko lang siya maka-experience ng parelax. Pero!"

Of her girly look, Monica smiled, "I was nervous at first but after seeing my new look, I'm elated. I love this style!"

As all got their turn, a surprise entrance brought makeshift excitement into the private room. "It Bamboo!" screamed one.

Jelcie was most excited, "My daughter likes their music. Ahh, all I know is they are foreign!"

Regine shouted: "Ang hot-hot nila. Despite their popularity, napaka-down-to-earth nila."

The band members Bamboo, Jay Cruz, Vic Manicad and Bobbay Aberoza accompanied Ingly posed on back of the winners.

Ng marveled, "Hanginang ito, grabe! I can't believe months ako kayo nakasabit ke si Bamboo."

Bamboo brought the house down during the Pepsi 'Rock Mo To' concert

SIMPLY moving Bamboo!

MERCADO on drums

JOYCE Dedicatoria, Dionisio Lee Pelias and Jennilyn Mia Higo ask for more!

CRUZ on guitar

AGANCON on bass

Music and your cola of choice

PEPSI's roster of artist endorsers includes big stars Beyoncé Knowles, Britney Spears, Pink, Enrique Iglesias, Jennifer Lopez, Shakira, Gwen Stefani, Robin Thicke, Christina Aguilera, Backstreet Boys, Hanson, Carlos Santana, Marilyn Cat Ta-Ruby Murillo and Jason Derulo.

DAMBOO is featured in Pepsi's latest ground-breaking TV commercial

LOCAL POP SUPERSTARS JOHNS PEPSI'S illustrious list of brand ambassadors such as Ray Charles, Tina Turner, Madonna, Mariah Carey, Nicky Minaj, the Spice Girls, Robbie Williams, Beyoncé Knowles, Britney Spears, Pink, Christina Aguilera, Enrique Iglesias and J.Lo, just to name a few.

"Pepsi has always had a history of music marketing, as embodied by its strong pool of global and local music endorsers over the years," says Pepsi's AVP for Marketing, Clan Guerrero. "We strive to be the youth's cola brand of choice, and music is one of the best ways not only to express our brand image but... more importantly, to connect with our consumers. We are committed to celebrating the music and sentiments of today's generation as best represented by one of the Philippines' hottest rock bands, Bamboo."

Bamboo's relationship with Pepsi began with their 2005 "Dare for More"/"Kaya Mo 'Yu" campaign, which clearly mirrors the band's motto and passion.

"We've always asked: Why Bamboo? Because who's heard their music and seen them perform live would understand why," adds Guerrero. "While globally and locally, Pepsi has usually gone for pop icons, we decided to try going in a different direction this time around. Bamboo has an intensity and passion that is a perfect fit for Pepsi. Their big hits talk about challenging the status quo and wanting more in life. This is exactly what Pepsi's 'Kaya Mo 'Yu' campaign is all about, and what we hope to inspire in today's youth."

Pepsi itself wins in first this campaign by always pushing the envelope in marketing and product innovation such as Pepsi Blue, Pepsi Fire and Ice, and the recently-concluded Pepsi Orna-Orna Song Division Wildcase Photo Bach Promo, the first of its kind loosely tied to raffle.

"It's a perfect fit," agrees Bamboo.

The band's success in the local scene is evident in the sales of their two albums "As the Music Plays" and "Light Years Love." They continue to rock with hits "Noypi" and "Dahil Sayo." The latter is featured in the exhilarating Pepsi TV ad.

"Our themes are social commentaries," explains Bamboo. "There are our opinions on what's happening. 'Light Years Love' was a personal response to our experiences after the success of the first album."

It is obvious there is no stopping their success as Bamboo goes on road tours in Singapore, Thailand and the US.

Looking forward to the coming year, Guerrero enthusiastically describes 2007 as "another big year for Pepsi and Bamboo as we continue to [run] for More."

"We're taking it to the next level: a third album is currently in the works," adds Bamboo.

As a brand, Pepsi has always kept its fingers on the pulse of the youth.

Guerrero summarizes, "Bamboo's empowering anthems have become the battle cry of today's young Pilipino generation. Pepsi is pleased to be working with the band to bring their message to a wider audience nationwide."

PEPSI AVP for Marketing Clan Guerrero and Pepsi brand manager Alvin Miranda

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ENTERTAINMENT

Lito Bonnie S. Velarde

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WINNERS. From left: Best Actor Robin Padilla; FPJ Awardee Eddie Garcia; Lifetime Achievement Awardee Amalia Fuentes; Bigwas Reyna; and actor Ricky Davao accept trophy for "Pusong Gala"; Lifetime Youth Achievement recipient Jennylyn Mercado

54th Famas held at last

Robin and Claudine call their awards 'blessings'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

PAG DUMATING ANG DAGDAG, dumadubdob (When it rains, it pours)," Robin Padilla tells Inquirer Entertainment a day after winning Best Actor for "La Vida Loca" at the 54th Famas Awards held on Sunday night—after encounters of delays.

It's the first Famas trophy he won, that's why he feels showered with good fortune. "Gusto kong magpasalamat sa Panginoon, sina sa Inang Pamplona, sa mga taong nagmamahalan, tulad ng aking dating asawa [actress] Sharon Cuneta . . . Mahalaga ang pakikialam ng aking mga parents ako bilang ama. Nakatawag ako dahil ang pamamalagi sa pakikialam ng mga nagsisipagpanalo sa industriya, tulad nila [Dahil producer] Tony Gloria, [competition director] Mari Moly at [choreographer] Geo Moly."

He reasons that when he heard his name called, he let out a big shout. "I didn't expect to win. Wala akong paniniwala na hawak ngayon."

He explains that he usually gives away his barong that he wore if he failed to bag a trophy.

Fourth award

"This year, tatlo bonus tabal ng barong ko," he quips. It's his fourth award for "La Vida"—after Emerald Tanglaw, Urian and Gawad Sining Pagasa.

Best Actress winner Claudine Barretto is just as jubilant. "My heartfelt thanks to the people behind Famas for recognizing my work in 'Huwag Ka Kikilos.' This is my second blessing from them. (She won last year for 'Milan.') I am truly happy. I really wanted to attend, but I had a first case of bronchitis every," she told the Inquirer via SMS.

Last month, Barretto also won Best Actress for "Dahas" from the Metro Manila Film Festival, given out by a Bureau agitator group.

For Chole Lazard, Barretto's director in "Sanggol," topping his category is like a "Judge Kim Dol." "After the awards ceremony, I asked myself whether I should continue. I guess, this is the answer. I thanked not the Famas voters in Wikipedia and not the lineup of past winners."

It was dead big, he gasps. "I have to stop myself from being affected and becoming arrogant because I still have a long way to go, considering Famas past winners."

This is Lazard's second win for "Famas," after Gawad Tanglaw.

Biggest winner

Produced by Star Cinema, "Sanggol" is the night's biggest winner, bringing home Best Picture, Supporting Actress (for Shiela Ysmael), Story and Screenplay (Ricky Lee and Rahel Hidalgo), Cinematography (Charlie Peralta), Make Carrie (Jessie Lacuesta) and Theme Song (Louie Occampo).

Other winners are: Supporting Actor, John Lloyd Cruz, "Dahas;" Child Actor, BJ "Tolits" Forbes, "Batalyo;" Child Actress, Ella Guevarra, "Bahay ng Himalayan;" Editing, Marya Ibañez and Vince Tolentino, "Mga Pusang Gala;" Sound, Arnold Reodica, "Dahas;" Art Direction, Mikey Ilac Asa, "Barong Balintawak 2;" Visual Effects, Igabi Media, "Exodus."

Special trophies were given to dentista Mignon Reyna, Lifetime Achievement; Eddie Garcia, FPJ Memorial Award; Amalia Fuentes and Mark Herras, Germao Marcos Youth Achievement; Bughaw Mangpuri, Gold; Ayaz Mercedes Santos, Jr. Issa Pressa Memorial Award, among others.

Special citations were also accorded to Mayor Bibiano "Benny" Belmonte Jr., Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista and Councilor Ariel Inton for championing the 6 percent amusement tax in Quezon City.

The ceremony was held in the MSB 4 studio and telecasted as part of Press Conference over Robert Rivera's show, "Pilipinas Kanyon Mo."

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OPENS NOVEMBER 22

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NOVEMBER 10-16, 2006

NOVEMBER 10
2:00pm Sana and the Last
3:45pm Everybody Famous!
5:30pm Mga Munting
Tinig
9:00pm Sisters

NOVEMBER 11
2:00pm The Pursuit of
4:00pm The Miracle of Bern
6:00pm The Caregiver
8:00pm Kasalanan ni Pilar

NOVEMBER 12
2:00pm When the Sea Rises
4:00pm Sisters
6:00pm Things that Make
Life Worth Living

NOVEMBER 13
2:00pm Sana and the Last
3:45pm Everybody Famous!
5:30pm Mga Munting
Tinig
9:00pm Sisters

NOVEMBER 14
2:00pm The Pursuit of
4:00pm The Miracle of Bern
6:00pm The Caregiver
8:00pm When the Sea Rises

NOVEMBER 15
2:00pm Sana and the Last
3:45pm Everybody Famous!
5:30pm Mga Munting
Tinig
9:00pm Sisters

NOVEMBER 16
2:00pm The Pursuit of
4:00pm The Miracle of Bern
6:00pm The Caregiver
8:00pm When the Sea Rises

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TV anniversaries and revivals

THIS YEAR, A NUMBER OF SHOWS AND stars are marking their umpteenth years in the entertainment biz. What has made them endure, and even flourish, while most of their contemporaries have been put out to pasture?

Let's start with those in the realm of "The Simpsons," the hit animated family show with a decided edge that's clicked with televisioners for its long, profitable years.

The key is to keep surprising your audience," drama creator Matt Groening, who could be right in sight for the popular show, which recently earned its 23rd Emmy.

Groening also stresses, "As long as the people who work on the show are having a good time, it's keep doing it. That's always been our methods. We figured, the minute we started to get intimidated if we were making ourselves laugh."

The show also makes it a point to lampoon nearly every aspect of US life and pop culture through the years, as film, the edgy, counter-culture approach made it popular with cutter audiences of liberals, but mainstream viewers were also intrigued via the "Simpsons" bandwagon, because it became the "in" thing to do.

"The Simpsons" has become so popular that a movie version is in the works, and is set for theaters next summer.

On its part, the crew's team to star "Star Trek" TV sci-fi show marked its 40th year last September. To underscore the anniversary, the TV Land cable network replayed four episodes from the original series, including the premiere telecast, which featured a "cub rocking" scenario from outer space.

VIEWFINDER

Jennifer C. Ramos

The series' success is attributed to viewers' abiding fascination with wild adventures, the imagined future's limitless prospect, the show's emphasis on the triumph of good over evil, and its hope that all creatures in the universe, no matter how different or even bizarre, can live together in peace and harmony.

Of course, the bizarre looks of some "Star Trek" creations have spawned a rabid fascination among the show's fanatics, but that's a testament to the power of the series's creativity. The roster of the series is that the pioneering series has led to the production of even more popular series like the "Star Wars" films.

On the local TV scene, program anniversaries are more a matter of seasons, since long-running Pinoy productions are no big deal, what with the likes of "Eat Bulaga!" telecasting for decades on end. What stops local television people's balls these days are re-runs of top-rating programs of old.

The big deal along these lines at present is the imminent revival of the pioneering TV soap "Flordeluna," which ruled over the TV screen for almost 15 years in the 1980s.

The popular troupedeer made a one of Lester de Rivera, and also featured the talents of Herbert Bautista, Lorenz Guillen and Dindo Fernando.

Many mature viewers are looking forward to the new "Flordeluna," and are especially pleased that their children and grandchildren will be able to enjoy the show, and appreciate it.

Currently on the tube is another revival, "John En Marey," and viewers enjoy being regaled by the updated comic adventures of Dolphy, Eddie Rodis and Maricel Soriano.

Other old TV favorites worthy of reviving include "Bulletproof" (quality drama), "Star Evening with Pilar" (film stars with Mr Gutierrez showcasing the best young singing talents), "Penny, Penny, Pinakbet," "Tonight with Dick & Carrie," "Bathroom Live," and Kiko Matsuura's talk show.

Deja Vu

Tony Scott's latest suspense thriller, "Deja Vu," stars Denzel Washington as an agent who falls in love with a symphony stranger in the past against time to track down her killer. The film also stars Jim Caviezel, Val Kilmer and Adam Goldberg.

In book is the stories of paranormal duo guide Washington's character through his complicated investigation, mostly through the thriller's stunning climax.

OPENS NOVEMBER 22

FROM YUEN WOO-PING THE ACTION CHOREOGRAPHER OF "THE MATRIX"
THE ASIAN VERSION OF "THE LORD OF THE RINGS"

DID YOU KNOW...

Bharat epic in six hours

NEW DELHI...BOLLYwood director Ravi Chopra plans to make a six-hour movie based on one of the greatest Hindu epics, "Mahabharat," a news report said.

This will be the longest film in the history of Hollywood, but it will be screened in two parts, Chopra said in The Times of India daily.

The epic is about a struggle within a dynasty, an ancient Sanskrit and the triumph of good over evil, Chopra's father, B. R. Chopra, produced and directed a popular 1988 television serial based on it.

The Hindi-language movie is expected to cost 1.5 billion rupees ($32.6 million).

"I will release it in two parts, one part on one Friday and the second part on the following Friday," Chopra was quoted as saying. "We are getting a special effects team from Hollywood ... and the movie will have an international look."

AP

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2 CASINO ROYALE	7 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
3 CASINO ROYALE	8 GUMARAS
4 CASINO ROYALE	9 THE MARINE
5 WAG KANG LILINGON	10 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS

ERMITA

1 CASINO ROYALE	
2 THE GRUDGE 2	5 CASINO ROYALE
3 THE COVENANT	6 WAG KANG LILINGON
4 CASINO ROYALE	7 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS

METRO EAST

1 CASINO ROYALE	5 CASINO ROYALE
2 CASINO ROYALE	6 THE COVENANT
3 THE GRUDGE 2	7 SANTA CLAUSE 3
4 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS	8 WAG KANG LILINGON

NOVALICHES

1 CASINO ROYALE	4 CASINO ROYALE
2 CASINO ROYALE	5 THE COVENANT
3 WAG KANG LILINGON	

CITISQUARE MALABON — **PIONEER**

1 CASINO ROYALE	1 CASINO ROYALE
2 WAG KANG LILINGON	2 CASINO ROYALE
3 RESERVE	3 WAG KANG LILINGON
4 RESERVE	4 THE COVENANT

STA. ROSA — **LIPA**

1 CASINO ROYALE	1 CASINO ROYALE
2 WORLD TRADE CENTER	2 CASINO ROYALE
3 WAG KANG LILINGON	3 WAG KANG LILINGON
4 THE PRESTIGE	4 THE COVENANT

DASMARINAS — **ANGELES**

1 CASINO ROYALE	1 CASINO ROYALE
2 CASINO ROYALE	2 CASINO ROYALE
3 WAG KANG LILINGON	3 WAG KANG LILINGON
4 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS	4 THE COVENANT

IMUS — **STARMILLS**

1 WAG KANG LILINGON	1 CASINO ROYALE
2 THE COVENANT	2 CASINO ROYALE
3 CASINO ROYALE	3 WAG KANG LILINGON
4 CASINO ROYALE	4 WORLD TRADE CENTER
	5 THE COVENANT
	6 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

BACOLOD — **ILOILO**

1 CASINO ROYALE	1 CASINO ROYALE
2 CASINO ROYALE	2 CASINO ROYALE
3 WAG KANG LILINGON	3 WAG KANG LILINGON
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ENTERTAINMENT

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5. Promo is open to Globe, Sun Cellular, Smart, Talk & Text Subscribers. P2.50 will be charged per text message sent to Globe, TouchMobile, Smart, Addict Mobile and Talk & Text subscribers. P3.00 will be charged for Sun Cellular subscribers.
6. Draws will be held on November 30, December 6, December 13 and December 20. Grand draw will be held on January 10, 2007.
7. All entries are cumulative. Non-winning entries will qualify for the succeeding draws. The more entries sent, the more chances of winning.
8. Cut-off dates for entries is every Sunday, 11:59pm prior to the draw date. For the Grand Draw, cut-off will be on December 31, 2006, 11:59pm.
9. Winners will be held at the Information Gateway office in the presence of a representative from BRAC Information Gateway and Master Foods Philippines, Inc.
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12. Neither winners will have to claim their prize.
13. Winners will be announced in 2 major newspapers after the grand draw.
14. Prizes are non-transferable and not convertible to cash.
15. All prizes are tax paid.
16. Children under 12 years old are not eligible to join the promo.
17. Employees of Master Foods Philippines Inc., all their agencies, suppliers, partners and sponsors, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2006 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

ENTERTAINME

Ban religion, says Elton John

LONDON—SELDOM-SHOULY OUTSPOKEN because it lacks compassion and promotes hatred of homosexuals, pop star Elton John said in an interview published Sunday.

The singer was speaking in a special "gay edition" of The Observer newspaper's Rising Monthly Magazine.

"I think religion has always tried to vent hatred towards gay people," John, 59, was quoted as saying.

"Organized religion doesn't seem to work. It turns people into really hateful human beings and it's not really compassionate."

He continued: "The world is mad anyway, so World War III and where are the leaders of each religion? Why aren't they coming together? I said this after 9/11 and people thought I was nuts. Instead of more violence why don't have a meeting of religious leaders? Like the peace movements in the '60s ... mass rave get-through to people by getting out there and doing peace concerts ... if John Lennon were alive today he'd be leading [such a movement] with a vengeance." AFP

Rushes

TOBEY Maguire and girlfriend Jennifer Meyer ... at rock duo. The pair danced around the stage and Bono got down on his knees, kissed Minogue's hand and thanked her at the end of the song.

"It's rock on honor ...," Minogue said. Bono responded, "You're perfect." AFP

Spider-Dad

LOS ANGELES—"Spider Man" star Tobey Maguire and his fiancee, Jennifer Meyer, are parents of a baby girl.

Meyer, a 29-year-old jewelry designer, gave birth Thursday in Los Angeles, Us Weekly and People magazines reported on their websites.

Maguire, 31, and Meyer have been together since 2003. AP

Tokyo holiday

TOKYO—Controversial pop icon Michael Jackson was expected to appear at a Christmas party in Tokyo, where the host tickets would be priced at ¥3,400 per person, a report said Sunday.

Organizers hoped to hold the event in Tokyo on Dec. 18, the Nikkan Sports tabloid said.

If Jackson agreed, the "Frozen in Christmas" show would be officially announced next week.

The plan is not for Jackson to perform at the event. The audience was likely to have dinner with him while listening to his recordsthrough, the report said. AFP

Bono-Kylie surprise

SYDNEY—U2 frontman Bono sent fans into a frenzy when he joined Australian pop princess Kylie Minogue for a duet as he made a surprise appearance at the second concert of her comeback tour.

The Irish rocker, in fighting for H2O Water, ran onstage late Sunday before a 10,000-strong audience that had turned out to see Minogue return to performing following 18 months of treatment for breast cancer.

The duo sang Minogue's hit "Kids," which she originally recorded with British heartthrob Robbie Williams, to rapturous applause at the Sydney Entertainment Centre.

Minogue, 38, had asked her surprise guest to join her just hours before the show.

She wore a leopard-print cat suit while Bono wore a black suit and biker sunglasses for what is sure to go down as a red letter

Squeezing sentiments dry

Hale's latest CD is still so achingly sad

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

REVIEW

WHY ARE THE SONGS OF HALE SO achingly sad?

In the band's second CD, "Twilight" (EMI Philippines), a sombre mood prevades almost every cut, hurtful feelings bearing down so hard that it's difficult to imagine the songwriters did this on a whim.

The perpetrators, chief among them Hale's guitarist Ball Guevarra, deliberately set out to squeeze the most brooding sentiments—a trait the band has embraced since "The Day You Said Goodnight" from its debut album broke onto the airwaves.

The 14-track "Twilight" again has Guevarra involved in the lyrics, five of which are his alone; the rest gives him co-writing credits. Vocalist Cheng Lai Yin, who contributes one, begging more for the moody English expression, gives life to the songs that a lesser who's been frustrated sadly.

Inner beauty

From the very first cut, "Last Song," images of a broken relationship surface ("You wear glad my heart/I was down on my knees..."). The speaker does not exactly deliver this in an screaming tone, but with a fragile sense of hope.

The mourning goes on in "Empty Tears, Empty Heart," but takes on a pretty interesting turn in "Hale," where stinging words of "The more frigid girls that I have ever known..." are eventually spoken, before a suppressed level of anger slowly gives way to a sense of fact declaration. "I hate you."

There are songs that, on first hearing, are in danger of being dismissed for their over-bearing style and approach. However, repeated playbacks would suggest the latter tendency thus would nudge the typical reaches inside into admitting, if grudgingly, that Hale is a group that thrives on melodious lamentations of heartbreak.

Lyrical flaw

Oh, but of course, sometimes sober groups have captured the palpable elements of this pop genre. Because Debbie Gibb is listening in to tears, the Bee Gees immediately come to mind ("How Can You Mend A Broken Heart?"). The only difference is, the Bee Gees had the advantage of a perfect three-part harmony while Hale has a soulful expressing his frustrations all by his lonesome. And with hardly any studio embellishment like reverb, what comes out is a natural sound of exhilarating like that of someone trying to find solace in the company of absolute.

But loosening up Hale while drinking might lead to scrutiny of every bit of lyrical flaw or awkward phrase apparent in a few songs, which, on second thought, is practically rampant and tolerated in contemporary music, especially rock 'n' roll.

Hale is now as much a rock act, although the guitars is a member of trusty polister alongside the well placed rhythm sections.

Here's what the fans, or even those contemplating on whether "Twilight" deserves their time, can surely expect: Towards the end, all the despair and desolation somehow vanish dissonance, when one of the tracks, the album's lyrics precious says, "The screaming is over."

There again, this bit of self-exhilaration is proclaimed in an oh-so-self contemplative air.

We can hear the girls screaming their hearts out.

A Botti holiday

Grammy-winning jazz trumpeter Chris Botti has collaborated with music's biggest names such as Sting, Michael Bolton, Gladys Knight and Steven Tyler of Aerosmith in his three albums. "In Love Again."

The album is a collection of romantic classics including "For You Lonesome Tonight" and "My Girl And Only Love."

Sony BMG recently released a new edition of Botti's best-selling holiday album "December," with two tracks like "I Really Don't Want Much For Christmas" with Eric Benet on vocals.

Cover versions

Lani Misalucha has released her eponymous album under Universal Records Inc., which contains cover versions of well-loved songs.

Among the selections in the album are "Hey Special Love" (Maureen McGovern), "I Can Help" (Dionne Warwick), "I Live For Your Love" (Natalie Cole), "Three Dreams" (Brian), "Love Me Again" (Lani Hall), "Close To Heaven" (Dionne Farris), "Someone To Die For" (Diana Ross), "Someone to Die For" (Michael Jackson).

LANI MISALUCHA

FEEDBACK

Guess who

From "Cheryl Sun" (hope27@yam.com), 3 Pinewatch Cres, Calgary, Alberta, Canada:

I am still glad, I've been overseas for six years now, I can't find in your archives the name of a certain actress. She was a teen star back in the '90s, pretty popular. She had a child with John Lk. She had movies with this cute guy, like "Mata in Puso," and she had a TV show on Saturday afternoons and her character's name was Peachy. Thanks. It's not urgent, but it will give me peace of mind.

Our guess is: Angela de Leon — Inquirer Entertainment staff.

Box office

U.S. movie revenues for Nov. 3-5. All dollar figures in millions.

Rank - Film - Weekend gross Gross to date - Weeks in release - Theatres
1. Borat $26.5 • One week • 837
2. The Santa Clause 3 $10.5 • One week • 3,616
3. Flushed Away $10.2 • One week • 3,707
4. Saw III $8.6 • Two weeks • 3,167
5. The Departed $7.1 • Five weeks • 2,765
6. The Prestige $5.1 • Three weeks • 2,388
7. Flags of Our Fathers $4.4 • Three weeks • 2,376
8. Rise of the Total $3.7 • Four weeks • 2,858
9. Open Season $3.3 • Six weeks • 2,458
10. The Queen $2.9 • Six weeks • 987

SOURCE: Exhibitor Relations Co.

Opening Today

Wai Kang Lilingon

Starring Krishtof Seymour, Anne Curtis, Marnie Aguasin, Raymond Bagatsing, Charlie Dy Peralta

Directed by Joey Gosiengfiao and Quark Henares

Joey Gosiengfiao's latest screenfest is a Yuletide home-leg s pair of seemingly unrelated stories, both haunted by strange spirits. "Salawahan," a Gothic tale of unnatural unrest that offers glimpses of the future, and "Uyuy!" (or Lullaby), a sinister mystery set in the medical world. "Salawahan" lead star Hartmann, who previously split that bodacious dubbers in the mouth, says she won't mind the costume silence. "I survive be in a crowded room," Actress Curtis, who plays a juror name invest-igating the deaths of some patients in a hospital in "Uyuy!": "It's very challenging and different for me. I made sure I would look convincing in the scary scenes." The thriller opens in 200 theaters nationwide and previews in Las Vegas, Los Angeles and several other US cities.

Maging Akin Muli

Starring Shaina Agustin, Noel Trinidad, Sandy Andolong, Bernie Lazaro, Nesti Bautista

Directed by Martino Diaz Abaya

Produced by Awad Communications Production, this film follows a young priest in his interests with his troubled parishioners (co-founding Institution, a former girlfriend and a prisoner on death row) and "vacationers (it's complicated)" along the way. Movies U. Tarot of the Universe commends the efforts of writer-director Abaya: "It's one of the most technically polished digital movies we've seen ... [proof] that digital doesn't have to mean dark, crappy images and poor sound. Abaya shows supreme performances ... [particularly Agustin's, which] melt only moving, insightful and inspirational, it also exhibits the film's spirited theme in a deeply felt way." Showing in 42/100 digital theaters.

Casino Royale

Starring Daniel Craig, Eva Green, Judi Dench, Mads Mikkelsen, Jeffrey Wright, Giancarlo Giannini

Directed by Martin Campbell

The 21st edition of super-spy James Bond's adventures goes back to creator Ian Fleming's first novel, but director Campbell updates it to include a present-day scenario like the "evil" against terror. Although Craig's starring as 007 was initially met with resistance, he eventually skewered with praise by British critics. Brad Antosch of BBC wrote: "He is the first actor to nail 007's defining characteristic: an absolute stylist. [At] length (2 1/4 minutes, 1911 diagrammatic long for an action flick ... [It's] a 1,000-watt jolt to the heart of a flagging franchise, bringing Bond kidnap—and frequently screaming—back to life." David Edwards of the Daily Mirror concurs: "Casino Royale is, sorting with the kind of edgy nuance that recalls Sean Connery at his best." Time's Josh Modell of The Telegraph opines: "It could have been off-and-laugh dash but Craig holds the reins."

Roundup

2 theaters suspended

The Movie Industry Anti-Piracy Organization has announced a four-week suspension on the supply of films for theaters of two Cinemaster malls.

In a press statement, the anti-piracy council said surveillance documentation of the malls in the malls were selling pirated video discs.

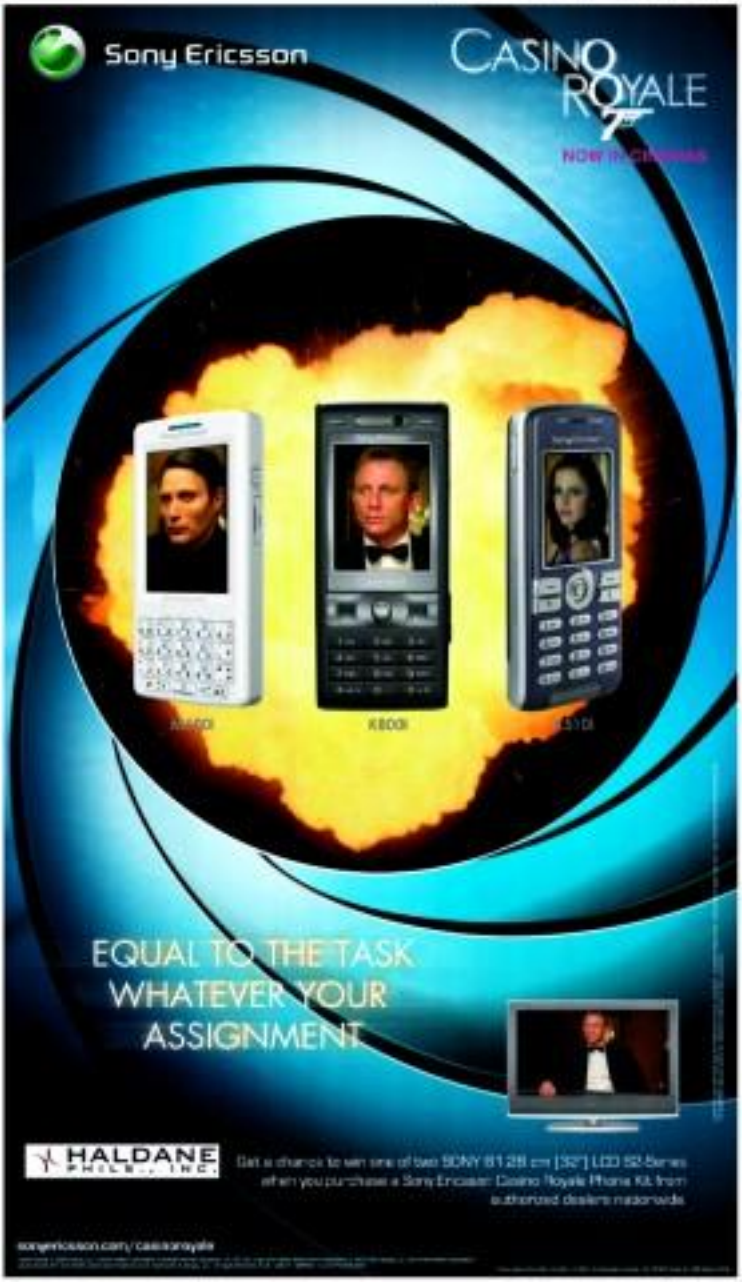
Agents who conducted the surveillance said they found contraband materials in seven malls on the first and second floors of SM Pacific Mall and seven malls on the third floor of the Mega Cosmic Mall.

The council said the suspension is effective from Sept. 12 to Oct. 10.

'Probe' on landslides

Tonight, "Probe" goes back to Southern Luzon to check on survivors of landslides after a geo-hazard assessment by geologists was formed the province's susceptibility to landslides.

The program interviews Loretta, Reynaldo and Roland from Guinsaugon, St. Bernard, which was literally erased after a deep-seated landslide last February.

The program also discusses disaster preparedness with geologists and the National Disaster Coordinating Agency.

The episode airs at 11 p.m. on GEO-GMA.